KING of the HUNGARIAN WOOD

The Remarkable Stories of an Extraordinary Timberman, His Extended Family, and Forgotten Empires

A Genealogical and Historical Account

By Jerry Zeisler

Dear Ancestor,
Your tombstone stands among the rest;
Neglected and alone.
The name and date are chiseled out
On polished, marbled stone.

It reaches out to all who care
It is too late to mourn.
You did not know that I exist
You died before I was born.

Yet each of us are cells of you
In flesh, in blood, in bone.
Our blood contracts and beats a pulse
Entirely not our own.

Dear Ancestor, the place you filled
A long long time ago
Spreads out among the ones you left
Who would have loved you so.

I wonder if you lived and loved,
I wonder if you knew
That someday I would find this spot,
And come to visit you.[1]

[1] *"Dear Ancestor" Poem by Walter Butler Palmer (1868-1932)*

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Use of AI Tools

Some portions of this book were edited or refined using OpenAI's ChatGPT and other language tools. All editorial decisions, structure, and narrative content are the sole responsibility of the author.

Dedication

This manuscript is dedicated to all those who have generously supported my research over the years, especially members of JewishGen.org and the Hungarian and German genealogy communities on Facebook.

My heartfelt thanks go to my sister, Bonnie, whose early research efforts and countless discussions inspired me to keep moving forward. To my former partner, Diane, thank you for your patience through the many years of my endless typing and storytelling. To my wife, Marlene, your unwavering love and support have made the completion of this enormous project possible. And to future generations—may you read these pages and discover your heritage.

Most importantly, my deepest gratitude goes to my cousins Zora, Erzsi, and Irina—direct descendants of the Groedel family—whose knowledge, enthusiasm, and invaluable assistance have been essential in bringing our family's history to life.

I love you all.

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In calmer times, a novel will surely be written about the origins of the Groedel estate, the career of this genius family, Zadig Groedel, who was the founder of the Groedel dynasty, and his most brilliant son, Hermann Groedel, who was so determined to build a fortune.

Keleti-Ujság (Eastern Herald newspaper), August 14, 1932

"PEOPLE – THINK, MACHINES – TOIL"

The History of the Groedel Family and their Forestry Business

From their wide-ranging timber operations during the mid-1850s through the end of World War II in Central Europe, the Groedel family amassed an enormous fortune rivaling that of John D. Rockefeller. They did so by creating a timber enterprise unparalleled in the Austro-Hungarian Empire and possibly all of Europe. The Groedel Brothers, using the German business name "Gebrüder Groedel," was begun by Zadig and his brother, Ludwig, in the mid-19th century, and grown exponentially by Zadig's eldest son, Hermann, with the support of his two younger brothers, Bernhard and Albert. The business manufactured lumber for buildings, railroads, fine furniture, musical instruments, matches, firewood, and myriad other products. They developed and led timber cartels and consortiums, owned timber-focused banks and built hundreds of miles of narrow-gauge railroads through the most difficult of terrain. In Romania, they had a virtual monopoly to harvest and export the highest quality timber available in the Carpathian Mountains. In Máramaros, they had a 25-year exclusive contract to use the Tisza River to float timber downstream. At their peak, they controlled over 250,000 hectares (617,000 acres) of prime forestland – about the size of Luxembourg, and owned entire towns. Their crown jewel, the Skole estate, covered 110,000 hectares, making it one of the largest privately held forest properties in the empire. From Máramarossziget to Kommando, they controlled railways, sawmills, and export routes, transforming the Carpathian forests into an industrial powerhouse.

But their legacy extended beyond raw land. The Groedels pioneered large-scale timber production, forming monopolies, securing exclusive government contracts, and revolutionizing Central Europe's lumber trade. Their sawmills, steamship fleets, and financial networks made them one of the Austro-Hungarian Empire's most influential business dynasties—until war, political upheaval and family squabbling shattered it all.

At its peak, the family fortune is estimated to have been worth between $2.5 billion - $3.0 billion in 2020 dollars, and possibly more. Besides the company's landholdings, the three brothers, Hermann, Bernhard and Albert, personally owned numerous impressive properties throughout Central and Eastern Europe.

Three important towns played host and fueled their incredible rise to success

and great wealth: Máramarossziget (now in Romania), Skole, in Galicia/Poland (now Ukraine), and Kommando (Comandau, near Covasna) in Transylvania/Romania. For many years, headquarters was in Skole, which included an impressive residence: the Groedel Mansion, where Europe's royalty and elite would visit to do business, hunt and socialize.

Timber and real estate was only part of their great wealth. They also amassed a plethora of valuable antiques such as 17th century Peter Paul Reubens tapestries, 18th-century French vases, a Playel piano, antique furniture collections and myriad oil paintings by famous painters. Bernhard's home in the Terézváros neighborhood of Budapest, located in one of the most historic areas in the city across from Hero's Square (Hősök tere), remains a significant landmark, and an example of an Art Nouveau-style bourgeois mansion, currently owned by the Fidesz political party, and maintained nearly as it was originally built at the beginning of the 20th century.

The Groedels' lives, much like the business empires they built, experienced extremes—tremendous prosperity followed by devastating collapse. While their financial and social ambitions placed them among Europe's elite, they were not immune to history's brutal shifts.

This introduction serves to introduce the family's remarkable business story—one of innovation, monopoly, and industry dominance—before exploring the human side of their experience in the chapters that follow.

PREFACE

The rise and fall of the Groedel family is a remarkable story of ambition, triumph, and loss. This German-Jewish dynasty built a fortune from timber during the 19th and 20th centuries, with operations stretching across Hungary, Galicia, Poland, Romania, Turkey, and even the United States. They weren't just businesspeople; they were empire builders. The Groedels formed timber cartels, owned banks, and amassed landholdings that supported their opulent lifestyle. Their world was one of grand estates, priceless art collections, and influence. But their story is far from idyllic: it's a tale of breathtaking highs and devastating lows, woven through with the shadows of anti-Semitism, two world wars, political upheavals, family disputes, and personal tragedies.

At the center of this rise stood brothers Hermann, Bernhard, and Albert Groedel, whose sharp business instincts capitalized on the booming industrial age. Yet, their success came with a cost. The relentless exploitation of natural resources fueled their wealth but left lasting scars on the environment and the populace—an echo of tensions that still resonate today. Their legacy speaks to the dual-edged nature of ambition in a world of rapid change.

Beyond the timber empire, the Groedel family tree branched into many fields. Their extended family of aunts, uncles, and cousins included owners of a celebrated Budapest haberdashery that thrived for 80 years, proprietors of Europe's largest textile mill, as well as journalists, executives, bankers, soldiers, playboys, musicians, doctors, and inventors, among others. Each brought their own unique story to the family's legacy, enriching it with their varied successes and colorful lives.

The Groedel family's aspirations went beyond business. Their estate in Skole, Poland (now Ukraine), stood as a symbol of their social prominence, rivaling the grandeur of Europe's finest residences. In many ways, their story parallels that of the fictional Russell family in the television series *The Gilded Age* (2022–2024+)[2]. Like the Russells, who were railroad magnates in New York City, the Groedels balanced their business ambitions with a desire to ascend socially. The splendor of the Russells' late 1800s Fifth Avenue mansion, with its luxurious interiors and societal ambitions, mirrors the elegance and aspirations of the Groedel family home.

The lives of the Groedel family, who emigrated from Germany to Hungary in the 1870s, were defined by constant change—soaring triumphs followed by

[2]*Streamed on HBO/MAX*

crushing losses. Their fortunes rose and fell with the tides of history, reaching the heights of wealth and influence before plunging into loss and upheaval. Time and again, war, economic crashes, shifting political landscapes, and personal betrayals upended their world, forcing them to rebuild, only to face new challenges. From the mid-1800s to the end of World War II, their story is one of an unrelenting struggle against forces both within and beyond their control.

Mostly lost through the haze of time and wars, the Groedels in Hungary, Poland, and Romania experienced the best and the worst that life offered. There was love, luxurious villas, spectacular hunting grounds, visiting princes and princesses, ennoblement, and friendships within the highest levels of royalty, interspersed with disappointment and family bickering laid bare in public for all to see. There were fun times juxtaposed with torture and death. The Groedel family experienced extremes of great wealth and significant financial loss. They lumbered through two wars, anti-Semitism, religious conversions, looting and destruction by the Russians, the Germans, and the Russians again. There was hateful politics, Auschwitz, suicides, myriad lawsuits, gambling addiction, Aryanization and more. They experienced it all, and most lived through it—but not by much. It tore them apart.

Each family member herein has a captivating story, shaped by their experiences navigating a time of profound danger, political turmoil, and financial upheaval. Regrettably, information about the women in the family is sparse. However, occasional glimpses offer some insight into their lives and personalities. During that era, women were often marginalized both in broader society and within the family, having minimal participation in the family business, and receiving harsh treatment from the younger generation, which accounts for the limited discussion of their activities herein. Even Hermann, the family patriarch, in his letters to his cousin and acquaintances, frequently mentions his sons while saying little about the women. There is almost no mention about his wife, Melanie, in his correspondence, although she was an integral part of their family life.

This book explores the Groedel's extraordinary journey, tracing the family's rise and fall through historical records, business dealings, personal letters, and family stories. Through these pages, we will uncover the world they built, the battles they fought, and the legacies they left behind. Their story, both inspiring and tragic, provides a compelling window into the power and fragility of ambition in an ever-changing world.

Figure 1.
Regina Löwy Weiner
Figure 2.
Caroline Melania Weiner

THE PICTURE OF A BEGINNING

Two old photographs of well-dressed women had always intrigued me. For decades, the pictures sat, forgotten, in a family drawer—unlabeled, unexplained, yet somehow impossible to ignore. The first, a portrait taken circa 1885 by Professor Károly Koller[3], owner of one of the most prestigious portrait-studios in Budapest of the time, presents a lovely woman, clearly wealthy, who is wearing a beautifully sculpted fur coat and dark flowing gown; her hair is elegantly braided and topped with a feathery white bonnet. She appears to be quite interested in displaying the rings adorning her left hand, while her right hand, equally adorned, is holding a pair of white satin gloves. Undoubtedly, she exudes the unmistakable aura of an affluent upper-class woman.

The second photograph was taken at the same studio during the same era. It shows a younger woman wearing a dark handmade gown cut in a slight 'V' shape hugging her shoulders. A frill draped across the top of the gown falls below the bust line, and a double-stranded pearl necklace lies close around her neck. A ring adorns her left ring finger and a watch and bracelets are wrapped around her wrists and arms. Highlighting her gown is a radiant sun-burst brooch centered at the bottom of the 'V' on her dress. If one looks more closely at the picture, it appears that subtle retouching has been applied around her waist as if to give her the perfect hourglass shape.

Years ago, my sister Bonnie, who is seven years my senior, told me a story about the women in the photographs. According to her, the older woman was a Baroness related to our family, though the exact connection was uncertain. The other woman was supposedly her daughter. The tale went that sometime in the early 1900s, they had visited the United States to see our great-aunts, great-uncle, and grandfather – siblings Florence, Polly, Cornelius and Eugene Zeisler respectively – who lived in Brooklyn, New York. Of course, after nearly a century, the actual details were hazy or misremembered, and may have been embellished slightly (in fact, it was the younger woman who held the Baroness title). But it begged the question - who exactly were these elegant ladies, and why did our family have their photographs? That curiosity marked the start of my nearly lifelong journey delving into our family's remarkable history, unraveling the untold stories of one of 19th and 20th century Europe's most prosperous and influential forgotten dynasties.

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[3] *https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/K%C3%A1roly_Kollerph*

The tale of their visit to America stuck in my mind over the years, as did several other intriguing family stories; we were somehow related to Hungarian nobility; three brothers had emigrated from Budapest to the United States, one of them being my great-grandfather Josef Zeisler, but the identities of the other two remained a mystery met with shrugged shoulders. Throughout my early years, tantalizing snippets of family lore would surface, hinting at our lineage's rich tapestry, yet none contained enough vivid detail to truly bring those stories to life.

As a young boy, I developed an interest in our family history. I loved to look at old pictures of my parents and grandparents, the older, the better, and listen to the family stories. When one is young, the act of researching family history is not foremost on the mind. Of course, the genealogical tools of today were not available then, and by the time I realized I had a passion for obtaining a better understanding of my origins, much of the information had disappeared out of reach. Restricting my passion further, important family members had died, memories faded, items were discarded, and stories changed, so much so that it became difficult to discern fact from legend.

Discovering information about my family from as far back as the records allow has certainly been challenging. I have pursued this process to satisfy my curiosity about my family, test my research skill, and leave a personal legacy. It is also about the excitement that comes with uncovering a new piece of information that fits neatly into the puzzle - to place an ancestor in an earlier place and time, to read the words they said, to know where they lived and walked, where they traveled, what they looked like, how they lived and whom they loved, to give them renewed life, has given me a great sense of purpose and excitement with each new piece revealed.

There are no diaries or extensive biographies to extract and draw from, and only a few family documents and pictures have survived from those earlier generations. Yet, amazingly enough, an engaging and astonishing portrait of the people and their lives can be resurrected. Fortunately, the families portrayed herein were frequently mentioned in newspaper accounts for good or otherwise. The Groedel family, having become one of the wealthiest families in the Austro-Hungarian empire during the late 19th and early to mid-20th centuries, was all too often mentioned in the newspapers, hailed as great philanthropists and businessmen having built a global lumber empire, yet frequently criticized as "thieves" and having paid too little in taxes shortchanging the local populace and the state. With

personal records and archival materials widely available online, along with several expeditions across the Atlantic to the homeland to search through private records, libraries and cemeteries, I have been able to develop a personal portrait of many family members, giving them life once again, linking to our past, showing us the paths our ancestors took, and just possibly providing a clearer view of where we are going.

Most of the stories herein are from publicly available resources such as birth, marriage, and death records, as well as immigration documents, city directories, passports, voluminous newspaper articles, and other public sources in the United States, Germany, England, Austria and Hungary. One important document that my late mother kept in the family bible was a list of family names and relationships. Significantly, my sister had the foresight to take notes during family discussions with our great-aunts, Polly and Florence Zeisler, in Brooklyn.

One major source in our early research was the Jewish Genealogy Special Interest Groups, in particular the former Hungarian Special Interest Group hosted by JewishGen (www.jewishgen.org). That group was key to providing the family with history, guidance, translations, and friendships when we hit the proverbial brick wall in our research.

Family feuding and the general dispersion of our small family over the years have resulted in the loss of information and verbal histories. Those that have avoided family contact assert that the family history has no meaning for them. I am frustrated by the fact that important histories and links will be lost to time by personality conflicts that, unfortunately, will never be resolved.

Significant letters, postcards, pictures and other family documents have been discarded or disposed of, accidentally and otherwise. For example, one family member accidentally discarded many family photos and documents when moving from Brooklyn to Florida. Within them was a postcard or letter from Romania, which is where the Groedel family home was located from the late 1800s through the 1920s; a potentially great loss to this family story.

With so much information discarded, lost, or stories left untold, this family history has still come together—funny and sad, exciting and tragic, and above all, full of...people.

DISCLAIMER

This family history is not intended to be a scholarly work. I've added historical background to provide context for the characters and their experiences, and to offer readers a sense of the challenges and struggles of the era. While I am neither a professional writer nor a trained historian, I've deeply enjoyed learning about Hungarian and European history and sharing it through this writing. My aim is simply to preserve our family's story for both present and future generations—to make it engaging, informative, and readable, even if it is somewhat lengthy. By placing our ancestors' lives within a broader historical framework, I hope to spark a deeper connection to the past—one that might help illuminate both the present and the road ahead.

I have been researching my family's history since the 1990s, accumulating a wealth of information over the years. Early on, I prioritized gathering facts over preserving sources. Now, as I write these stories and revisit my files, new questions arise. Some translations are poor, and certain websites are no longer accessible, casting doubt on the accuracy of the original information. In this family history, I have done my best to validate the material. At the time of writing, this is as accurate as possible given the tools, time, and focus I've applied. Still, there is a trove of unused material, including hundreds of newspaper articles and family artifacts.

Newspaper accounts, especially from the 19th and early 20th centuries, often contained inaccuracies, embellishment, and biases. Budapest alone had dozens of politically skewed newspapers prone to hyperbole or outright fabrication to make stories more compelling. For example, several papers reported that Baron Otto Groedel's hearing impairment was caused by his WWI service as an artillery officer, while others attributed it to a childhood illness. Though trivial in this case, such inaccuracies can distort the narrative, doing a disservice to the reader, the subject, and history itself. I've strived for accuracy, but no guarantees can be made.

As a non-professional writer, I sought assistance to make this extensive work engaging, well-structured, and readable. I used the AI tool ChatGPT to refine my text, ensuring clarity and adherence to grammar rules. In hindsight, I might have benefited from more attention in my high school English class. While the stories and ideas are mine, some phrasing reflects the AI's influence. Quoted text, however, has been preserved as originally written.

PRONOUNCING HUNGARIAN WORDS

Hungarian is a challenging language to learn. The one positive aspect is that it uses Roman letters, as does English, but some letters and letter combinations are pronounced differently than in English. In addition, Hungarian uses diacritics (accent marks), which I will not discuss here as there are many websites that can help.

- All multi-syllable words in Hungarian have an emphasis on the first syllable. I've attempted to assist with sounding out certain words in this document. In those cases, you will see words such as "ZA-la-ee" for the name "Zalai." The upper-case letters remind the reader where the emphasis resides.
- All "g" letters are hard sounds, as in the word "get."
- The letter "s" is pronounced "sh" unless it is followed by a "z", then, it sounds like an English "s". For example, the name "Sandor" is pronounced "Shandor," and Budapest is pronounced "Budapesht," but "Sz" is pronounced "s" as in "Sam."
- "Cz" as in Czeisler, is pronounced "Tseisler."
- "Cs" is pronounced "ch..." as in chicken.
- "ut" is the abbreviation of "utca" pronounced 'oot-tza' meaning "street": Lendvay ut.

Hungarian Name Conventions

Last name First name (Zeisler Jerry) with no comma
Last name First namené (...né=wife of...): Groedel Hermannné (Weiner Melania)

Spelling conventions respectively		
Hungarian	**Romanian**	**English**
Kovászna	Kovasna	Covasna
Brassó	Brașov	Brasov
Háromszék	Trei Scaune	Haromsek

A Brief Background

To the east of the Alps, a crescent of snow-capped mountains, the Carpathians encloses an alluvial plain – some tens of thousands of years ago, it had been a huge inland lake – interspersed with rolling hill country, protecting it from the open spaces to its north, east and south-east. In the south, it terminates at the river Sava, beyond which the mountain ranges of the Balkan Peninsula rise in the west at the foothills of the Styrian Alps. The Danube, foremost of Europe's rivers, enters it by the gap between the Carpathians' westernmost tip and the Styrian Alps; having collected the waters of all rivers that rise within or enter the basin, it breaks through the opposite end of the Carpathians at the Iron Gates[4].

In the closing years of the 9th century, a confederation of seven nomadic tribes, numbering perhaps a few hundred thousand people in all, crossed into this Carpathian Basin from the east, impelled to do so, if indirectly, by Byzantine foreign policy. Finding it well-suited to their pastoral-agricultural lifestyle and sparsely populated, they rapidly occupied it to settle there for good.

Modern Hungary

Hungary from 1867 through the early 20th century was a period marked by transformation, modernization, and social complexity, deeply influenced by its unique position within the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the broader European framework.

The Compromise of 1867 (***Ausgleich***) established the dual monarchy of Austria-Hungary, granting Hungary greater autonomy while maintaining its union with Austria under a shared monarch and joint foreign, military, and financial policies. This period, known as the ***Dualist Era,*** brought relative political stability and economic growth. Hungary became one of the empire's most important components, with Budapest emerging as a vibrant cultural and industrial center.

However, the political landscape was fraught with tensions. The Magyar (ethnic Hungarian) elite pursued policies of ***Magyarization***, aimed at assimilating non-Hungarian ethnic groups such as Slovaks, Romanians, Croats, and Serbs, leading to discontent and resistance. By the early 20th century, nationalistic aspirations among these minorities, combined with Hungary's growing dis-

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[4]*The* **Iron Gates** *is a gorge on the river Danube. It forms part of the boundary between Serbia (to the south) and Romania (north).*

satisfaction with its relationship with Austria, sowed the seeds of political instability that would erupt after World War I.

The late 19th and early 20th centuries were a time of rapid industrialization and urbanization in Hungary. Railroads expanded significantly, facilitating trade and communication. Budapest grew into a major commercial hub, often referred to as the "Paris of the East," attracting entrepreneurs, intellectuals, and laborers.

Industries such as textiles, food processing, and manufacturing thrived, supported by the region's agricultural base. Hungary became a significant producer of wheat, livestock, and wine, exporting goods across Europe. Banking and financial services also expanded, creating opportunities for both native Hungarians and a growing Jewish middle class, who were particularly active in commerce and industry.

The business environment was competitive yet innovative. Prominent families and partnerships, such as Adolf Weiner and Miksa Grunbaum in the clothing industry with Weiner és Grünbaum, capitalized on the urban middle class's demand for quality goods and services. These entrepreneurs helped shaped a modern consumer culture in Budapest and beyond.

Hungarian society was stratified, with the landed aristocracy dominating politics and wealth, followed by a growing bourgeoisie and a large peasant class. The Jewish population, which constituted around 5% of Hungary by the early 20th century, played an outsized role in the economy, culture, and intellectual life, despite facing prejudice and occasional pogroms. Over time, many Jewish families achieved remarkable social and economic mobility, with some converting to Christianity to mitigate discrimination, while continuing to practice Jewish traditions privately. King Franz Joseph I appreciated the contributions of the Jewish population. In the late 19th century, as Pest began to expand with grand avenues under construction, the King was asked, "Who will build it?" He replied, "*Meine gute Juden*" ("My good Jews").

Budapest became a beacon of culture, producing influential writers, composers, and scientists. The architectural boom transformed the city with landmarks such as the Hungarian Parliament Building, the Chain Bridge, and its grand boulevards lined with cafés and theaters.

Despite progress, Hungary faced significant challenges. The rural population remained largely impoverished and disenfranchised, with limited access to education and political representation. Ethnic minorities felt alienated by ***Magyarization*** policies, and urban workers began to organize for better conditions and wages as industrialization progressed.

Women's roles began to shift during this period, especially in urban centers. While traditional gender roles persisted, educational and professional opportunities for women slowly increased, particularly in teaching and healthcare. Social reforms aimed at improving health and literacy began to emerge, though they were often unevenly implemented.

By the early 20th century, tensions within Hungary and the Austro-Hungarian Empire mirrored the broader instability in Europe. World War I (1914–1918) devastated Hungary's economy, strained its political system, and exacerbated ethnic divisions. The post-war Treaty of Trianon (1920) was catastrophic, stripping Hungary of two-thirds of its territory and population, creating a legacy of bitterness that profoundly shaped its 20th-century history.

Conclusion

Hungary during this period was a land of contrasts—economic growth and cultural flourishing alongside deep social and political divides. Its trajectory reflected both the opportunities and tensions of modernization, as the country navigated its role within the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the shifting dynamics of early 20th-century Europe.

This, then, was the world in which the Groedels built an empire.

SUMMARY OF MODERN HUNGARY IN THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY

1910–1913: Hungary is an early leader in attempts to establish a constitutional system, but in the waning days of the Habsburgs, the country is part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Though Franz Joseph is king, each country has control of its domestic affairs, while foreign policy, defense, and their related financing are under joint control.

1914–1918: In June 1914, the heir to the Austrian throne is assassinated in Sarajevo, plunging Europe into war. In Hungary inflation skyrockets, wages are frozen, and food shortages mount. Two-thirds of Hungary's 3.6 million soldiers sent to war are killed. In October 1918 the exhausted people of Budapest, backed by the military, revolt and declare Hungary and independent republic. The monarch collapses.

1919: After World War I ends in defeat for Austria and Hungary, victorious powers signal their intention to give territory to Romania, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia. The Hungarian Communist Party, including many ex-soldiers, intellectuals, and Jews, holds power for four months before an authoritarian government composed of military officers ousts them and begins a violent purge of Jews and leftists.

1920–1928: Hungary signs the Treaty of Trianon and loses massive amounts of territory, population, and natural resources, in particular timber, arable land, and iron ore. Budapest industries are cut off from raw materials, and for decades Hungary will rely on foreign trade. In 1920 parliament restores the monarchy but instead of a king names Miklos Horthy regent, a position he will hold till 1944.

1929–1938: Grain prices crash when the Depression hits, and the economy stumbles. Hungary seeks financial help from the League of Nations, which imposes strict financial controls. Unemployment increases; industrial production drops; the standard of living falls. By 1933, about one in five in Budapest live in poverty. The country moves to the right politically when Horthy appoints Gyula Gombos prime minister.

1939–1945: Alliance with Germany in WWII helps Hungary regain lost territories. In 1941 Hungary declares war on the USSR and the U.S. and deports Jews, which will continue off and on throughout the war. The government attempts to switch sides in 1944, and Hungary is occupied by Germany. The Soviet army invades and ousts the Germans in 1945. Postwar Hungary suffers the worst documented hyperinflation in history.

SECTION 1.

GROEDEL FAMILY BACKGROUND HERE BEGINS

the story of the Groedel family from Hesse, Germany, that explores the lives of Hirsch Baruch Groedel and his wife, Hendle Cassella, along with their descendants. It follows their son Zadig Groedel and his wife, Fanny Ahl, their sons—Hermann, Bernhard and Albert—the legacy of their families and the timber business they built.

Figure 3.
Ludwig, Bermann, and Zadig Groedel (l-r)
Ca. 1875-1880

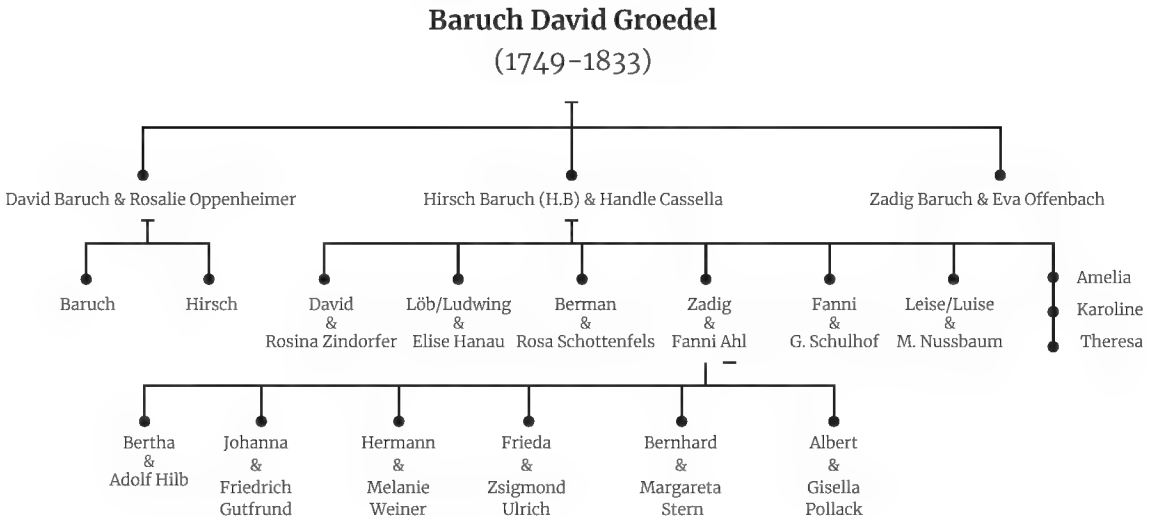


Figure 4. Baruch David Groedel Family Tree

FRIEDBERG

This chapter depicting the Groedel family in Friedberg, Germany, is primarily sourced from the late Hanno Müller's book "Juden in Friedberg," published in 2018. This meticulously researched and detailed volume explores the Jewish residents of Friedberg from the 18th to the 20th century.

The Groedel family portrayed herein, originally from Griedel and later Friedberg in Hesse, Germany, were followers of the Jewish faith. Baruch Gredel was the first to be mentioned in the 18th century in the "rent books" of 1775-1808 (mentioned from 1781-1808). The Groedel family took their name from the town of Griedel near Butzbach, and migrated to the Jewish community in Friedberg about twelve miles south sometime around 1781. The name Groedel has several spellings, among them Grödel and Grödl, and in the 18th century, Gredel (Baruch David Gredel/Grödel).

In 1788, there were 468 Jews in Friedberg; in 1805 there were 42 families - about 350 Jews (about 8 people per family); in 1861 there were 361 Jews, and in 1880, there were 438 Jews.

The Groedel family produced important researchers and entrepreneurs and lived in Friedberg for generations. Some family members lived in the nearby town of Bad Nauheim, some moved to Frankfurt am Main, twenty miles away, and a few found their way across the Atlantic to the USA—one even fought in the U.S. Civil War. One prominent member of the family, Dr. Franz Groedel, eventually moved to New York City and became a world-renowned heart specialist. He was a pioneer in radiology, a co-founder of the American College of Cardiology, and the first to show a moving picture of a beating heart taken from a fluoroscopic screen. Franz will play a small

but important role in our understanding of the collapse of the Groedel empire in Hungary at the end of the Second World War.

In connection with the Groedel family in Friedberg, Leopold Cassel/Cassella (1760-1840), founded the chemical industry in Frankfurt with his company Cassella AG, which survived as an independent company until 1995 and was one of many predecessor companies of today's global healthcare company, Sanofi. Leopold was an uncle of Hendel Cassel/Cassella (Figure 5.), wife of Hirsch Baruch (H.B.) Groedel - the head of the Groedel family discussed herein. (see the family tree in Figure 4. above)

Figure 5.
Hendle Cassella

In 1811, H.B. Groedel (1783-1849) married Hendle Cassella (1788-1868) and together they had nine children: Malchen (born Amalia 1815-1899), Ludwig (born Löb 1816-1899), David (1817-1899), Bermann (born Bernhard 1820-1890), Zadig/Zadyk (1822-1896; aka Zadig II), Fanny (1824 - 1906), Leise (Louise 1828-1901), Karoline (born Gidel 18?? - ?), and Theresa (18??-1844). H.B. had two brothers; David Baruch (1778-1853), five years his senior, and Zadyk Baruch I[5], nine years younger.

While in Friedberg beginning in the early 19th century, the Groedel family owned several successful businesses. The patriarch, Baruch David Groedel (1749-1833), who was H.B.'s father, sold various items. In 1803, Baruch was a prominent figure in the community. He possessed a 50% ownership stake in a residence located at Judengasse 6 and served as a community leader. In 1817, he sought citizenship, although his application was rejected, leaving us uncertain about whether citizenship was ultimately acquired.

Historical records shed light on his diverse business ventures.

On January 13, 1812, Baruch advertised in the Wochenblatt offering large and small quantities of "genuine Spalter[6] and Brunswick hops" for sale, critical constituents of beermaking. On November 2, 1812, he advertised good flax, white linen, and tow. On May 16, 1814 (issue no. 20), he offered woolen and cotton fabrics, calico, and similar goods.

Beginning in 1810, brothers H.B. and David were business partners, selling a variety of hardware, fruits and lumber. By 1838 and possibly earlier, they co-owned a hardware and specialty store called "Gebrüder Grödel.

---

[5]*Zadyk I is the son of Baruch David Groedel. Zadyk/Zadig II is the son of H.B. and Hendle Groedel.*

[6]*Spalter is a type of hops from a town in Middle Franconia*

The store offered a diverse range of goods, including building materials, axles, iron bars, coal, horse-drawn wagons, peas, fruits, farming equipment, wooden floorboards, beams, and slats. In addition to the store, they operated a separate warehouse in town. The business was well-promoted through frequent advertisements in local and regional newspapers. Notably, H.B.'s son Bermann worked actively in the hardware store alongside his cousin Hirsch, David's son.

Brothers H.B. and David collaborated on various business ventures, jointly owning several properties, including a hospital housing 13 residents. In addition to David's personal enterprises, which included moneylending and selling lottery tickets (with his son Hirsch), H.B. pursued his own business interests. Along with his wife, Hendle, they were successful merchants who expanded beyond their hardware store to establish a thriving haberdashery and finery business in Friedberg called "H.B. Groedel." Their youngest son, Zadig II, was actively involved.

As compared to their peers, the H.B. Groedel family was considered wealthy. To appreciate their status and wealth, in 1845, H.B. paid the 17th most taxes of any Jewish person in the town, 13 fl. 3 Kr[7]. The most paid was 28 fl. 3kr. Therefore, the haberdashery store and other ventures seem quite profitable. In 1859, Ludwig paid the 9th highest taxes, and Zadig paid an average amount (22nd).

H.B.'s last will and testament revealed his possession of government lottery bonds from various German states, which likely originated from his brother David, a noted financier. Notably, H.B. owned his house on Breite Strasse without any outstanding debt, valuing at 4,000 florin, and had a 50% ownership share in a clothing store building, valued at 600 florin. These assets and various other properties indicate that Hirsch Baruch Groedel and his wife, Hendle, enjoyed substantial wealth. Conversations with several Groedel descendants in New York City in 2022 affirm the historical understanding that many members of the ancestral Groedel family, such as the Schulhofs, were indeed financially well-off.

Shortly before the end of 1848, the brothers decided to dissolve their business partnership and split the business between the families, as their sons were old enough to take over, but more importantly, H.B. was becoming quite ill, nearing his death. Therefore, on January 1, 1849, the brothers formally and jointly announced the dissolution of the business, and that their sons would continue the business under separate firms.

[7] *Fl=florin, Kr.=Kruizer*

BUSINESS TRANSFER

(Clipping 1) To our esteemed friends, we hereby respectfully announce that as of today, we have amicably dissolved our business partnership and that our sons will continue the business we have managed up to now under separate firms.

We thank you for the trust so generously placed in us and kindly request that you extend the same level of trust to our sons.

The proprietors of the former firm Gebrüder Groedel

David Groedel I.
Hirsch Baruch Groedel

Referring to the above announcement, we further inform you that Ludwig and Bermann Groedel will continue the iron and specialty goods business at the former premises (next to Mr. Kummich) under the firm name:

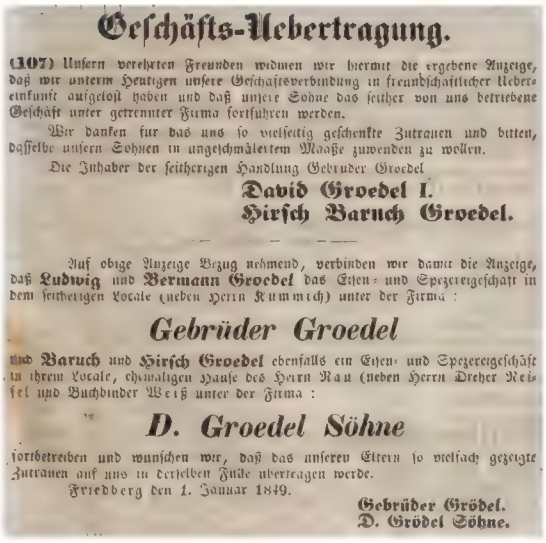
Gebrüder Groedel

Baruch and Hirsch Groedel will also continue an iron and specialty goods business at their location, the former house of Mr. Nau (next to Mr. Dreher Neisel and bookbinder Weiss), under the firm name:

D. Groedel Sons

We hope that the trust shown so often to our parents will be transferred to us in the same way.

Friedberg, January 1, 1849.
Gebrüder Groedel
D. Groedel Sons



Geſchäfts-Uebertragung.

(107) Unſern verehrten Freunden widmen wir hiermit die ergebene Anzeige, daß wir unſerm Heutigen unſere Geſchäftsverbindung in freundſchaftlicher Uebereinkunft aufgelöſt haben und daß unſere Söhne das ſeither von uns betriebene Geſchäft unter getrennter Firma fortführen werden.

Wir danken für das uns ſo vielſeitig geſchenkte Zutrauen und bitten, daſſelbe unſern Söhnen in ungeſchmälertem Maaße zuwenden zu wollen.

Die Inhaber der ſeitherigen Handlung Gebrüder Groedel

David Groedel I.
Hirſch Baruch Groedel.

Auf obige Anzeige Bezug nehmend, verbinden wir damit die Anzeige, daß Ludwig und Bermann Groedel das Eiſen- und Spezereigeſchäft in dem ſeitherigen Locale (neben Herrn Kummich) unter der Firma:

Gebrüder Groedel

und Baruch und Hirſch Groedel ebenfalls ein Eiſen- und Spezereigeſchäft in ihrem Locale, ehemaligen Hauſe des Herrn Nau (neben Herrn Dreher Neiſel und Buchbinder Weiß unter der Firma:

D. Groedel Söhne

fortbetreiben und wünſchen wir, daß das unſerer Eltern ſo vielfach gezeigte Zutrauen auf uns in derſelben Fülle übertragen werde.

Friedberg den 1. Januar 1849.

Gebrüder Grödel.
D. Grödel Söhne.

Clipping 1
January 20, 1849
©Intelligenz-Blatt (Oberhessen) via DDB

David's sons, Baruch and Hirsch, would run a new business on Enggässchen called "David Grödel Söhne," while H.B.'s sons, Ludwig and Bermann, would continue to run the iron and specialty goods business, continuing under the name "Gebrüder Groedel." The Groedel brothers sold the warehouse, which was 10 years old, and listed as *"with a beautiful, spacious cellar and attic, and is very suitable as a residential home."*

While the specific products each family sold remain uncertain, it appears the cousins were now competing to some extent. Less than a month after the partnership was officially dissolved in early January 1849, H.B. Groedel passed away on the 23rd.

Figure 6.
David Groedel Sohne store (Eisenhandlung). Date unk

Gebrüder Groedel, then under new management by Ludwig and Bermann, purchased a new warehouse next to the old one, and stocked it with axles, bar iron, boards, coal, etc. Customers could make purchases at either the warehouse or the hardware store "(next to Mr. Kummich and Mr. Werner's Apothecary)."

David Groedel and his sons Baruch and Hirsch were successful in financial transactions, i.e money lending, government bonds and granting credit in the mortgage business. In addition, the hardware store 'David Grödel Söhne" (Figures 6 & 7) was successful for many years before being sold.

As the Main-Weier railway opened in 1850, Gebrüder Grödel ventured into the forwarding and delivery business.

Figure 7.
David Groedel Söhne store at a different location: ca. 1910.

March 30, 1850

639) Friedberg.

Bei Eröffnung der Main-Weſer-Bahn verfehlen wir nicht unſer neu etablirtes

Speditions- und Commiſſions-Geſchäft

unter Zuſicherung der billigſten und pünktlichſten Beſorgung beſtens zu empfehlen.

Gebrüder Grödel.

(Clipping 2) Freight forwarding and commission business.

Clipping 2.
March 30, 1850
© Anzeigeblatt (Giessen), via DDB

With the opening of the Main-Weser railway, we would like to recommend the newly established ***forwarding and commission business*** *with the assurance of the cheapest and punctual delivery.*

Gebrüder Grödel

In 1851, at the age of 29, Zadig, H.B.'s youngest son, entered into matrimony with Fanny Ahl, who was 23 years old at the time, hailing from the town of Disbeck in the state of Neustad a/Aisch. Their union brought forth several children, born in Friedberg, respectively Bertha (1852 - ?), Johanna (1854-1940), Hermann (1856-1930), Frida (1860-?), Bernhard (1862-1936), and Albert (1868-1944).

In 1854, the Groedels established a partnership with the Bank for Trade & Industry in Darmstadt, allowing them to issue drafts at competitive rates on G. Baur & Comp. in New York. They also facilitated fund transfers from America. This secure and reliable service was promoted to agents and emigrants.

1854: FOR EMIGRANTS!!: THE BANK FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY IN DARMSTADT.

Für Auswanderer!!

(139) Wir haben uns mit

der Bank für Handel & Industrie in Darmstadt

der Art in Verbindung gesetzt, daß wir ermächtigt sind, zu jeder Zeit und zu dem niedrigsten Course Wechsel auf deren Commendate

G. vom Baur & Comp. in New-York

in jeder beliebigen Größe und Sicht abzugeben. Ebenso können wir durch dieselbe Vermittelung Gelder von Amerika kommen lassen.

Wir empfehlen diese höchst sichere und solide Gelegenheit den Herren Agenten und Auswanderern!

Friedberg den 22. März 1854.

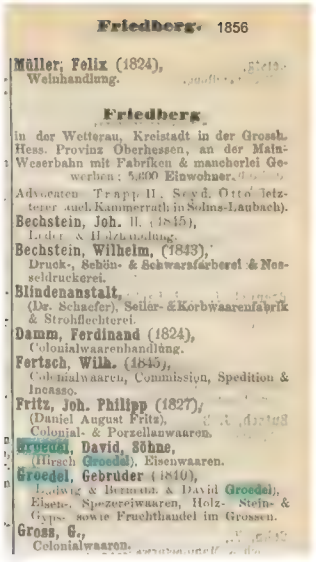
Gebrüder Groedel,
den drei Schwerdtern gegenüber.
Nro. 386.

Clipping 3.
25 March 1854
© Intelligenz-Blatt (Oberhessen) via DDB

This partnership reflects the Groedel family's role in facilitating international financial transactions during a period of significant transatlantic migration. By collaborating with the Bank for Trade & Industry in Darmstadt, they gained the ability to issue drafts (essentially written payment orders) on G. Baur & Comp. in New York. This service allowed clients in Europe to securely send money to the U.S., or vice versa, via a trusted banking network.

The service was particularly valuable during the mid-19th century, a time when many Europeans were emigrating to America. Emigrants and their agents could use this financial infrastructure to transfer funds safely, ensuring access to resources in a foreign land. The emphasis on security and reliability would have made this offering especially appealing to people embarking on such a significant and risky life transition. The service also provided the means to develop the family's future financial business strategy in the timber business.

On June 5, 1856, a notice announced that following an amicable agreement, Ludwig had taken over the business. The notice listed the current owners as Grödel Brothers—Ludwig and David Grödel. Curiously, it made no mention of Bermann, suggesting he had departed at some earlier time. However, David's involvement was brief; by 1857, he had relocated to Frankfurt, where he was renting out fruit sacks under the Gebrüder Grödel name. At the same time, he had been pursuing a locksmith license for several years that was nearing approval.



Friedberg. 1856

Müller, Felix (1824),
Weinhandlung.

Friedberg

in der Wetterau, Kreisstadt in der Grossh. Hess. Provinz Oberhessen, an der Main-Weserbahn mit Fabriken & mancherlei Gewerben: 5,800 Einwohner.

Advocaten: Trapp II., Seyd, Otto (letzterer auch Kammerrath in Solms-Laubach).

Bechstein, Joh. (1845),
Leder & Holzhandlung.

Bechstein, Wilhelm, (1843),
Druck-, Schön- & Schwarzfärberei & Nesseldruckerei.

Blindenanstalt,
(Dr. Schaefer), Seiler- & Korbwaarenfabrik & Strohflechterei.

Damm, Ferdinand (1824),
Colonialwaarenhandlung.

Fertsch, Wilh. (1845),
Colonialwaaren, Commission, Spedition & Incasso.

Fritz, Joh. Philipp (1827),
(Daniel August Fritz),
Colonial- & Porzellanwaaren.

Groedel, David, Söhne,
(Hirsch Groedel), Eisenwaaren.

Groedel, Gebrüder (1810),
Ludwig & Bermann & David Groedel), Eisen-, Spezereiwaaren, Holz- Stein- & Gyps- sowie Fruchthandel im Grossen.

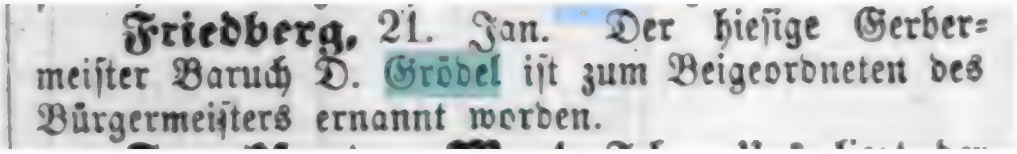
Gross, G.,
Colonialwaaren.

Clipping 4.
Friedberg 1856 town directory (clipping source unverified)

Because an important aspect of this book is the timber business, one of the most challenging questions to answer is when Zadig and Ludwig first entered the timber industry. Numerous newspaper advertisements provide potential clues to this question, offering glimpses into their early involvement in an industry that ultimately brought them wealth, high social standing, and nobility.

One early indication of their venture into lumber sales appears in the Friedberg town directory for 1856. Listed under "Grödel, Gebrüder (1810)" (Clipping 4.)—suggesting the business began in 1810—this entry shows that they dealt in various goods, including iron, hardware, specialty products, timber, stone and gypsum, and large-scale fruit sales. In this directory listing, three brothers are listed: Ludwig, Bermann and David. It would seem that the directory was published prior to the announcement that Ludwig had taken over and Bermann had left. Also notice that for David Groedel Söhne, Baruch isn't listed, only Hirsch, and their focus is on iron goods.

In 1869, David's son Baruch Grödel, a master tanner, became the deputy mayor. Although there was no public notification, it appears that Baruch might have departed David Grödel Söhne. A notice several years later, claimed that Hirsch was the sole owner of the business.



Friedberg, 21. Jan. Der hiesige Gerber-
meister Baruch D. Grödel ist zum Beigeordneten des
Bürgermeisters ernannt worden.

Clipping 5.

January 21, 1869: The local master tanner Baruch D[8]. Grödel has been appointed deputy mayor.

©Der Israelitische Lehrer - via Compact Memory

Sometime during the mid-1850s thru about 1874, Ludwig Grödel, was on the board of directors of the local synagogue, and later, in 1880, his name is included in a document that had been inserted into the synagogue's walled-in time capsule:

"To memory. Hebrew quotation from Psalm 127: A song of ascents by Solomon. The artist's work is in vain, God does not want that himself to Build temples. In vain all guardians Diligence if God does not guard the city himself. You vainly wake early and sit late and eat bread with worry, His friends are there in his sleep.[9]

[8] *I believe the "D" is a mistake, as Baruch David Groedel died in 1833. Baruch Groedel (1815-1892) was his grandson.*

[9] *Unless the LORD builds the house, its builders labor in vain. Unless the LORD watches over the city, the watchmen stand guard in vain. In vain you rise early and stay up late, toiling for food to eat-- for he grants sleep to those he loves.*

Friedberg, October 18, 1880. In the year of the world 5640/1880 this synagogue was rebuilt and enlarged for the glory of God and completed in 5641/1881. May the benevolent always protect him, above all protect accidents, and graciously answer the prayers ascending to him. The board: S. Hirschhorn, Elias Meyer, Emanuel Loeb, Ludwig Groedel, Mayer Hirsch.
The construction is managed by the Grand Ducal district architect Reuss. Mayor of the City of Friedberg Mr. C. Scriba".

Jewish Emancipation

By the mid-19th century, Jewish emancipation in Friedberg had made notable strides. Among the more than one hundred individuals belonging to the city's conservative and constitutionally minded citizens' association, at least twenty-five were Jewish residents—including members of the broader Groedel family, such as Baruch, Bermann, and Ludwig Groedel. Ludwig's transition from the traditional name Löb reflects an early stage of name assimilation among local Jews. Yet, despite these developments, the local implementation of the August 2, 1848 law concerning the acquisition of municipal citizenship remained sluggish. This delay is evident in correspondence sent by the Grand Ducal Government Commission for the Friedberg district to the city's mayor.

"We expressly point out that all Jews living in the city automatically receive the right of citizenship on the basis of Article 15 of the constitution and are therefore automatically admitted as local citizens."

Prior to Article 15 in 1848, Jews were required to submit requests for citizenship that offered benefits and protection. They had to prove they were of moral character and could provide for their own financial support. In some towns, they were required to pay a fee and usually paid an additional "Jew tax." On December 31, 1845, H.B. Groedel was admitted as a citizen of Friedberg; Ludwig was admitted on July 1, 1846; Zadig on February 25, 1847; and Bermann on March 31, 1855. H.B. had to prove he was worthy of becoming a citizen by showing what he owned, including real estate, businesses and government bonds.

Family Names

In line with customary Jewish tradition, names are often passed down through successive generations, with children typically receiving names in honor of esteemed deceased ancestors. In the past, when patronyms were employed, distinguishing one family from another could be challenging, such as identifying

an individual as "Samuel, son of David." To a certain extent, this naming practice applies to the Groedel family of Friedberg as well.

During the 1800s, the family featured a recurring set of names, contributing to some potential name confusion. Among these family members, three women were named Fanny Groedel, while there were three men with the name David Groedel. The name Baruch was quite prevalent, being used as either a first or middle name on five occasions, and Hirsch appeared numerous times.

To illustrate the complexity of the naming tradition, let's consider the case of the family patriarch, Baruch David Groedel. Baruch David Groedel's first son was David Baruch, his second son was named Hirsch Ludwig, third son was Hirsch Baruch, in remembrance of Hirsch Ludwig who had tragically passed away before Hirsch Baruch's birth, and fourth son was Zadyk Baruch. Therefore, the surviving sons of Baruch David Groedel were David Baruch, Hirsch Baruch, and Zadyk Baruch.

Fortunately, family trees meticulously assembled in 1884 and 1924 by Groedel family members, have proven invaluable in disentangling this web of names and identities, offering comprehensive information that includes full names, birth and death dates, and thus aiding in the clarification of the various family members.

More About Groedel Businesses

In 1849, as they entered their later years, H.B. and his wife, Hendle, jointly drafted a will outlining their intentions. Their will clearly stipulated that their sons would inherit the family's financial assets, with the condition that they provide their sisters with a monthly stipend and ensure the transfer of their inheritance and dowry upon their marriage. Tragically, a mere eight days after the signing of the will, H.B. passed away.

Following her husband's demise, Hendle assumed control of the finery store, operating it under the name "H.B. Groedel's Widow" ("H.B. Groedel Witwe"). This enterprise proved to be remarkably successful. Among her children, Zadig, at the age of 28 and still unmarried, played a vital role in the store's operations.

Nine years following her husband's passing, in 1858, Hendle, aged 72 and still in robust health, continued to manage the clothing store. During this time, her daughter, Luise (Figure 9.), was preparing to wed Meier Nussbaum, who would later become the parents of Hermann Nussbaum—a valuable source of family and business information in the future.

However, it seems that at the age of 72, Hendle felt that she had devoted enough time to the business, and as a heartfelt wedding gift to her daughter, she decided to sell the finery enterprise to none other than her soon-to-be son-in-law, Meier Nussbaum. The sale transaction was officially concluded just one day prior to Luise and Meier's wedding and was settled at a sum of 5,100 florin. Nevertheless, the family adjusted the amount by crediting them with Luise's dowry of 3,000 florin, which meant the newlyweds only had to pay 2,100 florin for the business.

Figure 8.
Meier Nussbaum

According to the agreement, the business's actual ownership lay with brothers Ludwig and Zadig, evident in the fact that the sale documents bore the signatures of both brothers. This arrangement strongly suggests the likelihood that Zadig and Ludwig had indeed inherited the business from their father upon his passing. Regrettably, a missing page from the will adds an element of uncertainty, but the assumption of inheritance appears reasonable as Muller's book confirms.

Figure 9.
Luise Groedel

In 1863, Meier Nussbaum and his wife, Luise, formerly Groedel, sought a loan of 4,000 florins from Luise's brothers, Ludwig and Zadig, with the purpose of acquiring a property. The loan agreement, though it did not specify the property's location, detailed the loan amount and the terms of repayment.

Interestingly, Hanno Müller's book provides valuable insights into the property. It documents the transfer dates of Jewish houses in Friedberg, revealing that, in the same year as the loan, Hendle (Luise's mother), sold her house to Meier Nussbaum. This loan effectively enabled Meier and Luise to purchase their family home from her mother.

In the OBERHESSISCHEN ANZEIGER No. 105 of September 5, 1891, Meier advertised:

"Real clearance sale due to business closure. Modern clothing fabrics as well as black cashmere, remnants at half price, cloth and buxkin, twill, fustian and bedding, white curtain fabrics, calico, shirt fabrics, white and colored. All items at reduced prices.

M. S. Nussbaum. Friedberg."

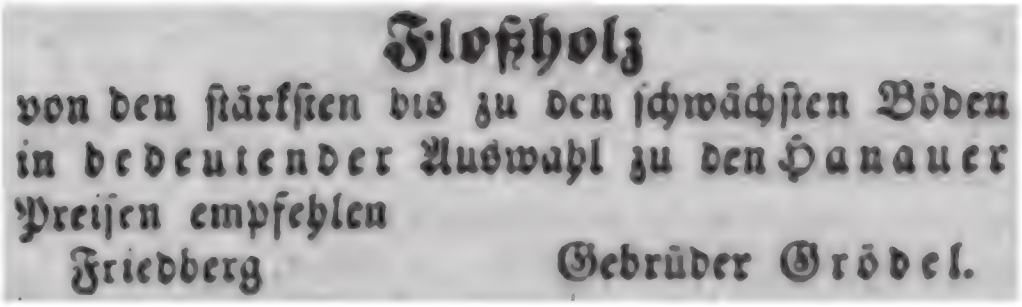
It is unknown why the business closed other than he retired. Meier passed away five years later on June 13, 1896.

Figure 10. Children of Meier and Luise Nussbaum: Emilie, Hermann and Hilda (l-r)

An intriguing facet of H.B.'s will was the provision that their youngest son, Zadig, was to inherit the house, yet with the stipulation that *"the wife [Hendle]*

retains the free use for life of the middle floor of the residential house offered to Zadig Groedel." This house consisted of three stories, with Hendle residing on the second floor. However, the family later reached a different agreement, as they sold the spacious house to the Nussbaums to accommodate their own growing family. As a result, Hendle relocated to another house that she owned independently.

On November 3, 1866. Gebrüder Groedel (likely Ludwig and Zadig), placed an advertisement in the Wetzlarer Kreisblatt (Wetzlar County Gazette showcasing flooring wood in a range of weights and types, priced according to Hanau recommendations—another hint of their timber-related activities.


Floßholz
von den ſtärkſten bis zu den ſchwächſten Böden
in bedeutender Auswahl zu den Hanauer
Preiſen empfehlen
Friedberg Gebrüder Grödel.

Clipping 6. November 3. 1866. ©Wetzlarer Kerisblatt – via DDB

Flooring wood

from the sturdiest to the lightest floors in a significant selection at the Hanau recommended prices.

Friedberg Gebrüder Grödel

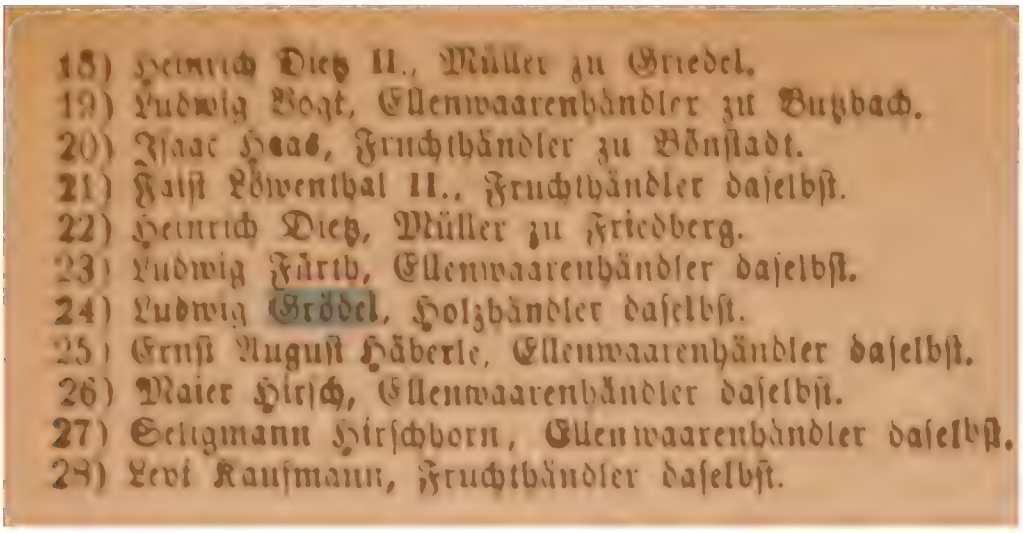
The document *Industrie der Oberpfalz* (Industry in the Upper Palatinate) also provides insight, indicating that Gebrüder Grödel was active in the lumber industry after 1863. In that year, Filiweber and Griebel opened the first steam sawmill in the Cham area, which was later acquired by Grödel. However, their time with the sawmill was brief, as they soon shifted focus to timber trading in Galicia. By the mid-1880s, the sawmill passed to new owners Forchheimer and Knaf. Although this document doesn't pinpoint the acquisition date, it helps narrow the timeline.

In 1863, Filiweber and Griebel opened the first steam sawmill in the Cham area between the train stations of Pösing and Roding in the so-called Mühlauer Lohe.' A few years later, the factory passed to Grödel, who only operated it for a short time as he was dedicated to the timber trade that was beginning in Galicia at the time. In the mid-1880s, Forchheimer and Knaf became owners of the plant.

In 1868, at the age of 82, Hendle peacefully passed away, and in her will, she

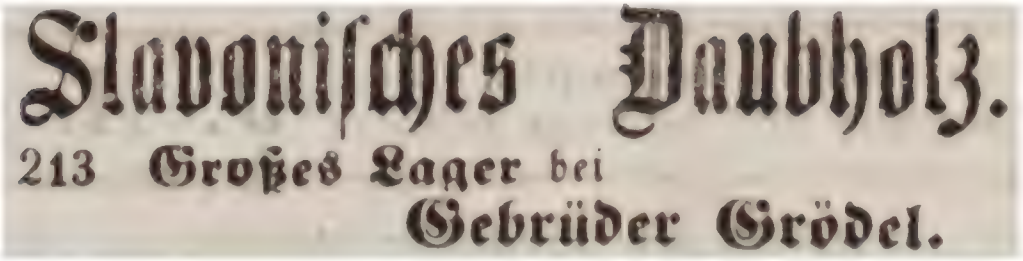
predominantly bequeathed the estate to her sons, Zadig and Ludwig. The reason behind the exclusion of their brothers, Bermann and David, remains undisclosed. Nevertheless, David chose a different path, embarking on a career as a locksmith and relocating to Frankfurt am Main.

On November 4, 1868, the newspaper ***Fr. Intelligenzblatt*** published a list of taxpayers, where Ludwig Grödel appeared as number 24, and was identified as a lumber dealer. This provides the first concrete evidence that the business specialized in selling lumber.

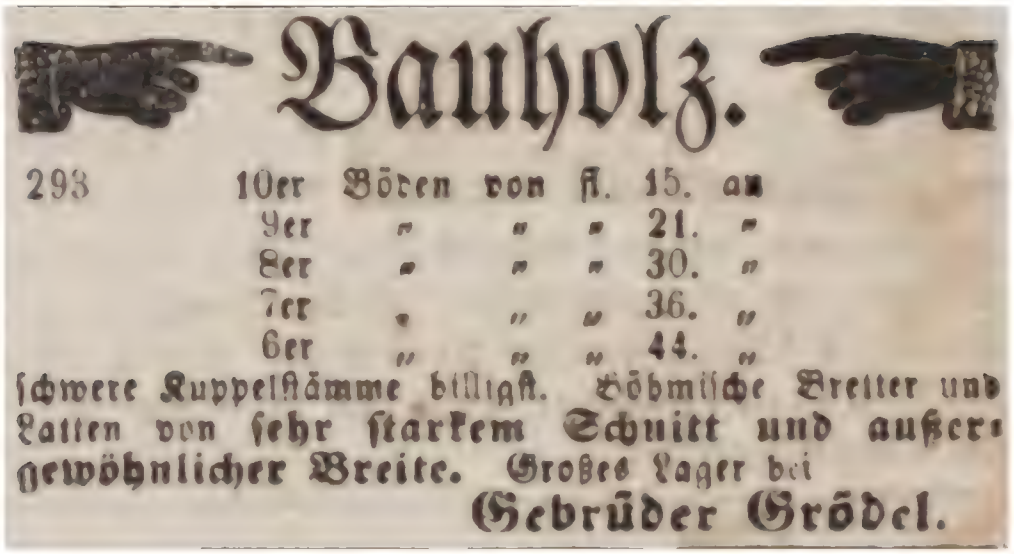

18) Heinrich Dietz II., Müller zu Griedel.
19) Ludwig Vogt, Ellenwaarenhändler zu Butzbach.
20) Isaac Haas, Fruchthändler zu Bönstadt.
21) Falk Löwenthal II., Fruchthändler daselbst.
22) Heinrich Dietz, Müller zu Friedberg.
23) Ludwig Färth, Ellenwaarenhändler daselbst.
24) Ludwig Grödel, Holzhändler daselbst.
25) Ernst August Häberle, Ellenwaarenhändler daselbst.
26) Maier Hirsch, Ellenwaarenhändler daselbst.
27) Seligmann Hirschhorn, Ellenwaarenhändler daselbst.
28) Levi Kaufmann, Fruchthändler daselbst.

Clipping 7.
April 11, 1868.
©Friedberger Intelligenzblatt (via DDB)
Ludwig is a lumber dealer

Advertisements in 1870, further clarify that the Groedel Brothers business was selling wood and wood products.


Slavonisches Daubholz.
213 Großes Lager bei
Gebrüder Grödel.

Clipping 8.
January 20, 1870
Slavonian oakwood.
Large stock at Gebrüder Grödel
©Oberhessischer Anzeiger (via DDB)


Bauholz.
293 10er Böden von fl. 15. an
9er " " " 21. "
8er " " " 30. "
7er " " " 36. "
6er " " " 44. "
schwere Kuppelstämme billigst. Böhmische Bretter und
Latten von sehr starkem Schnitt und außer-
gewöhnlicher Breite. Großes Lager bei
Gebrüder Grödel.

Clipping 9. January 29, 1870 ©Oberhessischer Anzeiger (via DDB)

Construction timber...

[Price list]

Heavy rough logs at the lowest prices. Bohemian planks and battens of very thick cut and extraordinary width. Large stock at Gebrüder Grödel.

These advertisements show that the business was heavily invested in timber by 1870.

An advertisement, published on May 1, 1872, in the ***Kölnische Zeitung*** (Cologne Newspaper), reveals more about their timber business: they were seeking an accountant familiar with the industry for immediate hire, confirming that by 1872, Zadig and Ludwig were firmly established in the timber trade. Still, the fourteen-year period from 1858 to 1872 remains largely undocumented. An advertisement, published on May 1, 1872, in the ***Kölnische Zeitung*** (Cologne Newspaper), reveals more about their timber business: they were seeking an accountant familiar with the industry for immediate hire, confirming that by 1872, Zadig and Ludwig were firmly established in the timber trade. Still, the fourteen-year period from 1858 to 1872 remains largely undocumented.

Accountant!

I'm looking for a capable businessman, free from the military, as a bookkeeper and accountant for immediate entry, who may know our industry.
Friedberg in Hesse.
Groedel Brothers,
Timber shop

Buchhalter!
Wir ſuchen einen tüchtigen Kaufmann, militairfrei, als Correſpondent und Buchhalter zum ſofortigen Eintritt, der womöglich unſere Branche kennt.
Friedberg in Heſſen.
Gebrüder Groedel,
Holzhandlung.

Clipping 10.
May 1, 1872
©Kolnische Zeitung (via DDB)

On February 4, 1874, another advertisement sheds additional light on their activities:

Business for sale

Due to the large expansion of our business in Bavaria and Bohemia, I intend to sell our local finery business, which has been very successfully operated, together with real estate under particularly favorable payment terms.

Friedberg (Hesse)
Groedel Brothers
Timber Shop

This announcement shows that by 1874, Zadig and Ludwig had decided to sell off their father's businesses and properties in Friedberg. This establishes their deep involvement in timber well before 1872, as they had built a successful enterprise with multiple locations. Yet, details of their initial steps into timber remain elusive. All we know for certain is that they sold lumber as part of the original "Gebrüder Groedel" operation in Friedberg from at least 1856.

The puzzle deepens with the discovery that the 1858 contract under the name "H.B. Groedel" (the finery shop) was sold to Meier Nussbaum. This raises the perplexing question of how they could have sold the business a second time unless it wasn't the finery shop but a different establishment that was being sold. There are other possible reasons, but this issue currently remains unresolved, leaving the sale shrouded in ambiguity. Regardless of these perplexing circumstances, Ludwig and Zadig carried out the sale of their Friedberg business and properties.

From the newspaper notice below, we gain insight into the rationale behind this move. The brothers had acquired a property and a sawmill in Regensburg, situated along the Danube River, and the funds were earmarked for yet another, substantially larger investment that was quite a distance away.

Allgemeine Zeitung (General Newspaper in Regensburg)

February 25, 1875

The merchants Zadik Zacharias Groedel from here and Ludwig Groedel of Friedberg near Frankfort a. M. have been running a timber trading business with a steam sawmill establishment in Roding with the sole seat in Regensburg under the name of Gebrüder Groedel in open company since 29 December 1874.

In late 1874, Zadig and his older brother Ludwig founded the Groedel Brothers timber enterprise in Regensburg, Germany, likely soon after acquiring a sawmill along the Danube River in Roding. While the family had originally been based in Friedberg, a notable change occurred on May 19, 1874[10], when Zadig and his family departed Friedberg, relocating to Regensburg by August to oversee operations at the new sawmill. Interestingly, Ludwig and his family chose to stay behind in Friedberg, and once Zadig settled in Regensburg, he never returned to his hometown. Despite living in separate cities, the brothers collaborated to manage their timber business together for several more years.

The question of why and how Ludwig and Zadig ventured into the timber industry remains shrouded in mystery, as there is no documented record of their prior experience in forestry until at least 1858. Hanno Müller's book does not provide any mention of the Groedel family's involvement in the lumber business, despite H.B.'s hardware store selling wood flooring and various lumber materials, which could have possibly inspired Zadig and Ludwig.

In later years, Hungarian newspaper articles speculated about the origin of the Groedel timber business, suggesting that Zadig inherited it from his father. However, as we've observed, no evidence supports this claim. Regrettably, Müller's book lacks any reference to a Jewish individual in Friedberg who owned or worked in the lumber industry. Notably, various city directories do list lumber businesses in the town, including several with names that appear to be of Jewish origin.

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[10]*Hermann noted the date in a letter to Count Koziebrodski dated January 7, 1914*

In his 1851 marriage request to the town, Zadig explicitly identified himself as a "Modewarenhändler," which translates to a milliner or fashion retailer. However, the advertisements and announcements found in the previously mentioned newspapers provide compelling evidence that Zadig and Ludwig transitioned into the timber industry at some point after 1858.

Although information regarding other Gebruder Groedel sawmill locations in Germany or surrounds during this period are minimal, several articles and notices imply a vast and successful lumber business within Germany, Bohemia, and possibly other countries.

By 1872, brothers Zadig and Ludwig Groedel, had established a successful timber business that

they began several years earlier. Nevertheless, the Groedel brothers wouldn't find the pot of gold from the lumber business in Germany; they would find it in the distant mountains of the Austro-Hungarian empire.

To that end, in 1874, the brothers secured a substantial contract with the Hungarian government, granting them the rights to harvest a vast expanse of the Carpathian Mountains around Máramaros. This arrangement brought with it an expansive acquisition of forest lands, spanning across tens of thousands of hectares, encompassing regions in Hungary, Transylvania, Galicia, the present-day Czech Republic, Slovakia, Bohemia, Bavaria, and Moldova's Buzău area. Their strategic move was underpinned by the belief in the timber industry's promising future, a belief that would soon be vindicated. Their visionary outlook not only proved accurate but catapulted them to a position of immense wealth, making them one of the most prosperous families in Europe during the first half of the 20th century.

THE GROEDEL LEGACY: FORTUNE AMID TRAGEDY

Szeged and the Great Flood of 1879

This section draws from Anna Lato's 1976 monograph, "Zadik and His Descendants," originally published in Korunk. The material has been paraphrased, condensed, and restructured to preserve the historical narrative. Lato, the daughter of the Groedel company's chief engineer in Romania, provides valuable firsthand insights into the firm's operations. While critical of the younger Groedel generation and the company's poor safety practices discussed later, her account offers rich historical context at the pivotal moment of the Groedel's first major success.

In the spring of 1879, the Hungarian city of Szeged was struck by one of the most catastrophic floods in its history. The city was unprepared. The Tisza River overran its banks and obliterated vast portions of the city, costing 146 lives, leaving thousands homeless and entire neighborhoods in ruin. At least 5,400 houses collapsed. It took about three months for the water to recede, and during that time, people traveled on floating planks and boats.

"The water came in on us on St Gregory's day... oh, what an ugly devil that was.... And the strong winds that drove the water all the way.... I had an old boat and we used that for fleeing. When the water was coming, it was rolling like rocks, high up! It was roaring loud... I remember I thought no one, not even God has as much money as to pay for all the damage Szeged people are about to have...[11]"

Zsigmond Móricz

Figure 11.
Szeged Flood - 1879

[11] *This quote is believed to originate from a public newspaper article or oral recollection. It is used here for historical context under fair use.*

Figure 12.
Szeged Flood - 1879

On March 17, Prime Minister Kálmán Tisza and Franz Joseph, Emperor of Austria and King of Hungary, visited the ruins of the town and began discussions of arranging financial and physical support for the rescue work and reconstruction.

The King exclaimed:

"Szeged is gone, but will rise again! Szeged will be more beautiful than ever before!"

As the scale of destruction became clear, rebuilding Szeged became a national priority—and an opportunity. Russia, Germany, Italy, England, France, and Belgium sent financial support for the reconstruction.

At this moment, Zadig Groedel, a lumber merchant in Máramarossziget, recognized both the humanitarian need and the economic opening. The Austro-Hungarian government was eager to accelerate the city's reconstruction, and construction companies across the empire scrambled to secure reliable sources of building material. Zadig stepped forward with a bold offer: he would supply large quantities of timber directly from his operations in Transylvania, efficiently and on short notice.

In the years following the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867, the empire entered a period of relative political calm that encouraged economic expansion. With Hungary regaining partial sovereignty, both domestic and foreign investors began to explore opportunities in resource-rich frontier regions. Transcarpathia, in particular, drew attention for its vast and largely untouched forests. Yet while private capital showed interest, the Hungarian state was slow

to develop a coherent forestry policy. The treasury held extensive forest lands but lacked either the will or the organization to manage them effectively. In some cases, officials treated state resources more as personal spoils than national assets—embezzlement and inefficiency often trumped economic vision.

Nevertheless, the dual monarchy's era of cooperation made certain ventures possible. Leasing agreements with the treasury—especially for steam-powered sawmills and timber concessions—opened the door for private firms to operate on public land. This system, combined with growing demand for lumber across Central Europe, helped put Transcarpathia on the map as a timber hub.

In 1874, Zadik secured a ten-year contract to harvest state-owned forest in Máramaros County. This marked a turning point in the family's fortunes. He soon relocated to Máramarossziget, a bustling regional center that lay within Hungary until the Treaty of Trianon in 1920, after which it became part of Romania. Today, the town—now called Sighetu Marmației—sits in the far northeast of Romania, near the Tisa River and the Ukrainian border, forming the southeastern boundary of the Transcarpathian region.

Zadig made an offer few could match. His sawmills in Máramarossziget were already producing at scale, and he quickly diverted output for the Szeged contracts. But his success wasn't due to logistics alone. Groedel worked his political connections in both local and imperial circles to ensure priority status and favorable contract terms. Timber that had been acquired at modest prices from state or communal forests was sold to government contractors at significantly elevated rates. Zadig was selling the former owner's goods at a high price - to the former owner.

The profits were extraordinary. Within a matter of months, Groedel's name had become well known among officials managing the reconstruction, and his reputation as a reliable supplier—despite murmurs of opportunism—was firmly established. For some, his actions were seen as bold entrepreneurship in the face of national crisis. For others, especially his competitors, they bordered on exploitation.

Nonetheless, the episode became a turning point in the Groedel family's business success. The windfall from the Szeged rebuilding contracts provided the capital and credibility the company needed to expand rapidly across the Car-

pathians. Soon, the Groedel name would become synonymous with industrial-scale logging, modern sawmilling, and—eventually—continental reach. This chapter marks the first significant leap in the Groedels' rise: a fortune built not only from wood, but from timing, connections, and a tragedy that reshaped a city.

Fire

The company was beginning to supply the lumber to rebuild Szeged, when, on the evening of August 1879, a fire broke out in the sawmill and associated buildings at their German plant in Roding and burned them to the ground. The fire engulfed the boiler house, a residential house, a forge and an apartment. No injuries were reported. The company applied for and received the insurance money, which was substantial. Whether or not they rebuilt the sawmill in Roding is unknown, but the family seat and business headquarters remained in Regensburg for the next eight years. The loss of the Roding sawmill doesn't seem to have seriously impacted the business coming from Szeged or its fortunes.

Moving On

While in Regensburg, as each of Zadig and Fani's daughters married, they left the family home. In 1875, Johanna married Friedrich Gutfreund and left for Leipzig; in 1877, Bertha married Hermann Hilb and moved to Stuttgart, and in 1882, Frieda married Sigmund Ulrich and lived in Augsburg.

Wilhelm Adam Schmidt, who had become a partner in Gebrüder Groedel with Zadig and Ludwig, left Regensburg for Máramarossziget, nearly 700 miles to the east, and ran the new sawmill and business from there, during which time Zadig and son Hermann continued to run the business in Regensburg.

The Criticism Begins

The *Tisza and Southern Hungary Timber Merchants and Woodworkers Association* expressed dissatisfaction with the government's 1874 contract with the Groedels, granting them the rights to harvest timber in Máramaros. Initial financial outcomes from the first five years were favorable for exports, benefiting the Groedels, but proved detrimental to the domestic wood industry. Furthermore, in direct contravention of the contract, some of the timber from the Máramaros forest was assigned for domestic use in the reconstruction of Szeged. The association's primary grievance stemmed from the fact that the timber allocated to the Groedels for export and, in certain instances, sold locally, was notably superior in quality and offered at a more competitive price compared to what local Hungarian lumber companies could obtain and process.

In December 1879, shortly after a gathering of industry businessmen concluded, their leaders published an article critical of the agreement:

"The state owns large forest estates in Máramaros, the products of which are sold partly inland and partly abroad.

The government follows a special method of sale, namely, for the export of a considerable part of the products of the forest of Marmaris, it has concluded a contract with the Regensburg shipping company 'Grödel Brothers', so that, while the best and thickest timber for sawing, from 30 cm upwards, is contracted to be sold at 3 forint 4 krajczár [kr.] per unit, - while the owners of steam mills and timber merchants in the country can only obtain lower quality material, material which can only be processed by steam saw to a lesser or no extent, and material under 30 cm. at 70 kr. per unit.

In this way, it seems that the Government intended to create a market for Hungarian timber abroad, but its calculation was wrong, even improper, and it even allowed the foreign firm [Groedel] to sell the timber it had bought in Máramaros, domestically; Moreover, the timber which it has shipped abroad, when processed abroad, can be obtained there at a much lower price than the finished products which can be obtained from the timber processed by the steam sawmills in Hungary; and the loss which results from this is that the Hungarian workers are deprived of their work.

In short, while the highest quality Hungarian building timber is being taken away from the Hungarian industry and trade in Máramaros for the benefit of export, the timber trade in Southern Hungary and the Tisza region is feeling the lack of such

timber; furthermore, the best Hungarian building timber is being sold disproportionately - by 86% - at a cheaper price to foreign traders, and thus the lower quality material is being paid more dearly by Hungarian traders."

The members then went on to note, in a comparison, that the tax paid on meat worth 40 forints is the same as the tax on lumber worth 1 forint, 2 krajczár. Rather than a tax on weight, they wanted to include the value of the article.

In summary, the domestic timber industry was paying a higher price for lower quality raw material than buyers outside of the empire could purchase higher quality processed wood. This was a very profitable enterprise for the Groedels but not for others.

A Visit to the Sawmill

Over the years, numerous groups visited the Groedel sawmills and shared stories about their experiences. These first-hand accounts often provide fascinating insights into the mill's operations and business, including discussions about the infrastructure, interactions with company guides, and meetings with the sawmill's manager or owner—who was frequently a member of the Groedel family.

In 1883, the journal Vasárnapi Ujság (Sunday Bulletin) published a lengthy article by Szász Károly about a four-day trip that he and several others took to Máramarossziget to visit numerous salt mines and underground salt lakes in the region. While there, they briefly stopped at the Groedel sawmill and commented about the what they saw.

1883 Vasárnapi Ujság – pg 569

"Coming out of the mine, we immediately boarded the salt-carrying, narrow-gauge railway that transported us down the hill to the treasury chamber, where our present cars were waiting. The chamber, north of the Island, is almost connected to the city. What we wanted to see here were not the chamber buildings, which really have nothing to see, but the great mill, which processes the pines transported here from the forests of the treasury mountains into planks and slats and the most beautiful and largest I have ever seen. Today, the sawmill does not belong to the Treasury, but to the Grödel firm of Regensburg (Bavarian) origin, which set up and manages this mill itself under a contract with the Treasury.

The contract is for ten years, with the right to process a maximum of 90,000 square meters of wood (beam cross-section) per year; he pays his square meter to the treasury with 3 forint 53 2/10 krajczár and after the end of ten years he puts the whole factory, with his equipment, into the ownership of the treasury without any further compensation. The sawmill works with 16 large saws, equipped with 160 saws (individual saw blades) and driven by a single large steam engine. Planks and slats of various thicknesses, from the finest, come out from under it with unparalleled speed and precision. Falling sawdust fuels the machine, which doesn't use a single log of wood. We spent a good half hour in this beautiful factory, looking at everything in it. Then we got into the cars [and departed]."

The Groedel Brothers' timber business faced many challenges as it grew. Market fluctuations were a constant concern, with the demand for timber changing due to economic cycles, multiple wars, and political changes. The Groedels had to skillfully navigate these shifts to maintain stability. Exporting lumber worldwide brought significant logistical problems, including ensuring timely shipments, managing transportation costs, and maintaining supply chains. Additionally, Romania's old-growth forests in the Carpathian Mountains were ancient woodlands with rich biodiversity, including bears, wolves, lynx, and wild cats. These forests were immensely valuable, both aesthetically and spiritually, as they were untouched ecosystems shaped by natural processes. However, at that time, sustainable forestry practices were not well-defined, posing ethical and practical challenges in balancing timber extraction with environmental conservation.

The timber trade was fiercely competitive, with numerous companies vying for market share. The Groedels had to differentiate themselves to stay ahead. Operating across multiple countries meant navigating varying regulations, taxes, and political climates, especially within the Austro-Hungarian Empire, which experienced significant political upheavals, especially after World War I. These events disrupted business operations and stability. Technological advancements in the timber industry evolved slowly, and staying updated with new machinery, processing techniques, and innovations was essential. Despite this, Central and Eastern European timber companies, including the Groedels, relied primarily on cheap manual labor for extended periods. Additionally, the Groedels faced cultural adaptation challenges, having moved from Germany to Transylvania. Adapting to new cultures, languages, politics, and business practices added another layer of complexity to their operations.

IMPACT ON CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

The Groedel Brothers' concern significantly impacted local communities in the regions where they operated. Their business provided substantial employment opportunities, supporting livelihoods and economic stability for local residents. The company's activities contributed to economic growth, with timber sales generating revenue that stimulated other businesses and services, leading to a positive ripple effect on the region's prosperity. To facilitate timber extraction, the Groedels invested in infrastructure development, including roads and railways, that also improved connectivity and tourism opportunities for nearby communities. The Groedel's philanthropic endeavors extended to local communities, supporting various social and educational initiatives such as schools, hospitals, religious and cultural institutions, enhancing the quality of life for residents. The Baron's family, part of the Jewish aristocracy, had a cultural influence, enriching the local cultural landscape through their patronage of arts, music, and literature. However, the Groedel Brothers business also faced challenges and conflicts, including environmental impacts from logging operations, labor disputes, and concerns over worker conditions. Despite these issues, their legacy has persisted, with their impact on local communities remaining a part of regional history and memory.

Due to their timber operations, the Groedels faced significant environmental controversies and criticisms. Their extensive logging led to large-scale deforestation, disrupting ecosystems and affecting wildlife habitats, soil stability, and water quality. Clear-cutting forests increased soil erosion and intensified rainwater runoff, causing sedimentation in rivers and streams, harming aquatic ecosystems, and affecting downstream communities. The removal of diverse tree species disrupted natural biodiversity, with monoculture plantations replacing native forests, reducing the variety of plant and animal species. Timber operations also required water for processing and transportation, and improper water management practices impacted local water resources.

The Groedels faced ethical concerns over their logging methods, particularly clear-cutting in sensitive areas, leading to conflicts with the local community and conservationists. Some local communities expressed discontent due to environmental degradation, loss of traditional gathering areas, disruption of hunting grounds, and altered landscapes. Limited reforestation efforts exacerbated deforestation. As environmental awareness grew, public perception

shifted, and the Groedel Brothers faced scrutiny from environmentalists, academics, politicians and concerned citizens advocating for responsible forestry practices. In hindsight, the Groedel Brothers' success came at a significant environmental cost, serving as a reminder of the delicate balance between economic prosperity and ecological stewardship.

The timber business shaped economies, cultures, and landscapes in Central Europe, leaving a multifaceted imprint on the communities where they operated. The Groedel story intertwines with the broader narrative of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the changing dynamics of the early-to-mid 20th century. The Groedel Brothers' ability to navigate, frequently rebuild, and endure the multitude of political, financial, familial, and societal upheavals is a testament to their resilience. Their legacy endures through the fascinating stories surrounding their entrepreneurial journey.

SECTION 2.

HERMANN, BERNHARD AND ALBERT "KING OF THE HUNGARIAN WOOD"

Pester Lloyd, November, 30, 1930

Baron Hermann Groedel is dead. The industrialist Baron Hermann Groedel here at 74 years of life died from a heart attack. Baron Groedel was born in Friedberg near Frankfurt am Main, where his father ran a timber trade. The Gebrüder Groedel company was already one of Germany's largest wood production companies. The young Groedel entered his father's business early and worked there with his brothers Bernhard and Albert[12]. The company later operated in all of the continent's wood exploration countries, and a branch was opened in 1880 to exploit the groves in Máramaros. This later became so important that the Gebrüder Groedel company moved its activities there. Forests in Galicia were later acquired, particularly the Skole forest domes. These forests had an extent of 50,000 cadastral acres. The business of the Gebrüder Groedel company soon grew to such an extent that it was one of the largest wood producers in Europe. The company also had large woodworking companies in Romania. The company made such an important contribution to the Hungarian timber business that the three Groedel brothers received the Hungarian hereditary barony in 1905. Baron Hermann Groedel, the head of the company, was regarded as one of the most outstanding experts in the timber business, and his international connections also secured him an excellent name in foreign countries. Since the end of the war, the company has had a very extensive business, especially in Romania, with branches in Bucharest, Brassó and Kolozsvár. Baron Hermann Groedel resided in Bucharest and Budapest, as his family and social ties to Hungary made him. His demise is mourned by a distinguished kinship.

Figure 13.
Hermann Groedel von Gyulafalvi, 1904

[12]*Bernhard and Albert began working with their father on occasion while in university. Albert was living in Augsburg from age 10–20, and Bernhard was in school earning his engineering degree. At times during their university education, they did take breaks to go home and work in the business.*

Ujság, November 30, 1930

Baron Ármin Groedel, one of the leading and prominent figures in Hungarian economic and social life, passed away unexpectedly on Friday morning at the age of 74. The name of Baron Ármin Groedl was known not only within the borders of the country, but also in the whole economic life of Europe. Ármin Groedl has built one of the most powerful wood conglomerates in Europe.

...

The whole large company was managed by Ármin Groedl. With unprecedented toughness and quick and instantaneous recognition of business booms, he was always at the forefront and dictated the business moves of the timber market throughout Europe. All his aspirations were to make his company as big and powerful as possible...

These two obituaries provide a fairly concise summary of Hermann's life, his aspirations, and his accomplishments.

Baron Hermann Groedel von Gyulafalva und Bogdan was born into a period of significant transformation within the German states. The year 1856 found these territories fragmented but on the cusp of unification. The Revolutions of 1848 had shaken the political landscape, and although they failed to unify Germany, they set the stage for future consolidation under Prussian leadership. Hermann's birthplace, Friedberg, situated in Hessen, would eventually become part of the German Empire formed in 1871.

The Groedel family, being Jewish, lived during a time when Jewish communities across Europe were influenced by the Haskalah, or Jewish Enlightenment, which promoted integration into broader society while preserving religious identity. In Germany, Jews experienced varying levels of emancipation depending on the state, with full legal equality achieved only after unification in 1871. Meanwhile, Budapest was emerging as a center of Jewish cultural renaissance within the Austro-Hungarian Empire, especially after the "Ausgleich" of 1867, which granted equal rights to all citizens.

Professionally, Hermann thrived during an era marked by rapid industrialization and economic expansion in Central Europe. His career as a timber and land baron, as well as an industrial magnate, placed him within the burgeoning capitalist class that benefited from the liberal economic policies of the late 19th century. The creation of railroads, urbanization, and technological advancements provided ample opportunities for enterprising individuals like Hermann, particularly in resource-rich areas such as Hungary.

By the time of his death in 1930, Hermann witnessed the dissolution of empires and the redrawing of Europe's map following World War I. The Austro-Hungarian Empire, of which Budapest was a major city, had collapsed, leading to the establishment of new nation-states. The Treaty of Trianon in 1920 drastically reduced Hungary's territory and population, affecting its economy and social fabric. Hermann passed away in a Budapest much changed from the one he knew during his prime, yet still grappling with the outcomes of the Great War and the onset of the Great Depression.

The baron was a multifaceted individual whose life revolved around his family and the timber industry. Known for his sharp business acumen, strategic philanthropy, and leadership, he left a lasting impact on the European timber market. Despite facing criticism, his contributions to the industry and his family's prosperity earned him notable recognition and a lasting legacy.

Exploring Hermann's life and background is a challenging endeavor, mainly due to the scarcity of information regarding his personal history and upbringing. Most of what we know about Hermann comes from articles written by individuals with various biases, who were focused on his business activities that had benefits but also significant negative consequences for some.

However, we can gain some insights into his personality from family oral traditions, but which may have evolved over generations. References to Hermann's social interactions are few, but we are fortunate to have access to a modest collection of personal letters authored by Hermann himself. These letters, exchanged with family members, associates, and friends, including Hermann Nussbaum, his first cousin and trusted confidant, offer a limited yet valuable glimpse into his fundamental character, complementing the information obtained from newspaper accounts and family stories.

Hermann's letters paint a picture of a multifaceted personality. He emerges as a strategic and foresighted businessman, deeply devoted to his family, resilient in the face of societal challenges, and grounded in practical realism. His empathy, social consciousness, and unwavering principles further enrich the portrait of a man who successfully navigated the complexities of his time. Through his correspondence, we gain valuable insights into the character of a remarkable individual whose legacy is marked by both personal and professional triumphs.

Figure 14.
Hermann 1908

Separating Hermann from his timber business is difficult as, arguably, he ***was*** the business. His life centered around the timber industry and Gebrüder Groedel, and to a lesser extent, his family. And although Hermann was extraordinarily charitable, his philanthropy usually came with a business advantage. While his brothers Bernhard and, to a lesser extent, Albert, were intimately involved, it was Hermann who led the business to its great success.

Hermann's obituaries provide a reasonable overall view of his character, although tending to be positive, as most would. Much of what we have learned about Hermann's personality comes from newspapers and anecdotes, several describing how well he treated his employees and his philanthropy. One bit of insight is to read the inscription he posted on the business entrance in the Skole sawmill –

"People Think...Machines Toil."

Hermann surrounded himself with knowledgeable and self-sufficient people, many who had significant influence in political circles. In December 1907, Hermann wrote to his cousin, Hermann Nussbaum, in Frankfurt that the Skole facility nearly ran itself. He had placed a lawyer, a longtime employee, in charge:

Figure 15.
Baron Hermann Groedel ca. 1919

"Skole runs like a mill wheel, completely by itself, I have nothing to do with this business, Ludwig Faatz from Friedberg is the sole lawyer there and manages the business with great prudence and understanding, he is in a brilliant position and may - when he leaves Skole after five years - have a fortune of over 500,000 Mk. A golden nail falls from a golden wheel. When Faatz came to our shop thirty years ago, he used to work for "David Groedel Sohne" in the iron shop, his uncle did not have a tenth of the assets that Faatz has today."

In contrast to the positive aspects of his life and business acumen, much was written by his detractors who wrote vicious and distorted allegations regarding Hermann and his enterprise that were driven by political, anti-Semitic, or nationalistic motives rather than objectively depicting the individual he truly was. However, court cases that mention Hermann and his discussions with other businessmen and politicians, show that he pushed the system's limits to acquire as much wealth as he could, as most highly successful businessmen might do, angering those of lesser means and different ideologies and whom wished to be antagonistic. With Hermann's significant influence in the timber industry of the Carpathians, his relationships with key political figures locally

and throughout Europe, and with the creation of timber coalitions, he was able to orchestrate business intertwined with state politics. Thus, he maintained control over local resources by exploiting the dependence of rural mountain dwellers, thereby shaping the forest history of the Carpathian Mountains.

Marriage

The years between 1885 and 1887 became an additional turning point for the business and the family. Carolina Melanie Weiner was a woman of twenty years in 1885. As the daughter of Adolf Weiner and Regina née Löwy, she likely spent much of her time at her father's prestigious and highly successful men's clothing business in downtown Budapest called "Grünbaum és Weiner," (Figure 16.) and alternatively "Weiner és Grünbaum" depending upon the store location. The family lived in a luxury apartment above the store at the intersection of what today is Károly krt. and Kossuth Lajos ut.

Figure 16.
Store Grünbaum és Weiner

Adolf had been the owner of the clothing business since the 1860s, along with his partner Miksa Grünbaum. The business flourished, expanding to as many as five locations across Budapest, ensuring the family's financial well-being. Regina Löwy, Adolf's wife, was the eldest among her six siblings and two half-siblings. She was seven years older than her sister Irma, who happens to be the great-grandmother of this author. Irma tied the knot with Josef Zeisler in 1879 at the Dohany Synagogue in Budapest, with Rabbi Kohn presiding. Following their marriage, Irma and Josef resided with the Weiner family above the store for a brief period. In 1877, Josef and his younger brother, Ignatz, owned a stationary store just a few blocks away at Muszeumringstrasse 27 (today, Muzeum krt 27), which was a convenient but temporary arrangement.

Figure 17. Carolina Melanie Weiner Groedel (1865-1942)

In 1885, there were numerous daily and weekly newspapers in Budapest, but only a few announced the wedding of Melanie and Hermann, and only briefly on March 26:

"Groedel Ármin [Hermann] will have his wedding with Miss Melania Weiner on the 29th of October."

Hermann and Melanie were also married by Rabbi Kohn in Budapest's Dohány Synagogue. The attendees included Hermann's uncle Ludwig from Regensburg, the related Ulrich family, Frau R. Groedel[13] from Regensburg, and business partner Wilhelm Adam Schmidt. Of course, Melanie's and Hermann's parents were there as well. Josef and Irma were unable to attend as they had emigrated to the US four years prior, in 1881.

After Hermann and Melanie married, towards the end of 1885, Hermann's uncle Ludwig withdrew from the lumber business he and his brother Zadig, began. Ludwig remained in Friedberg.

In 1887, Hermann acquired two properties: Máramarossziget and Skole. The property in Máramaros was to become the family and summer home, while the property in Skole became company headquarters, and temporary living quarters for some on occasion.

Due to their extensive philanthropy and for enhancing the Hungarian lumber industry worldwide, in 1903, the brothers were awarded ennoblement with the following family crest (Figure 18.):

The family crest features a shield divided into two sections, each symbolizing key aspects of the family's identity and heritage.

The left side (gold/brown background) depicts three evergreen trees standing atop rocky terrain, likely representing the family's ties to the lumber industry and mountainous regions, such as the Carpathians. The earthy tones suggest stability, strength, and connection to nature.

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[13]*I have not been able to positively identify this person, but it could be Rosina Zirndorfer Grödel – wife of Hermann's uncle David.*

The right side (blue background) features maritime connections, which hints at their involvement in exports or river transport. The blue backdrop evokes a sense of movement.

The crest above the shield shows a knightly helmet topped with a crowned arm holding a curved sword, a traditional symbol of nobility, power, and defense. The presence of the crown reinforces the family's ennoblement, while the sword suggests strength and readiness to protect their interests.

The decorative mantling of flowing red, blue, gold, and silver elements surround the shield, representing chivalric tradition and status. These colors often symbolize loyalty (blue), courage (red), wealth (gold), and purity (silver).

Figure 18. Groedel von Gyuafalva crest

Overall, the crest visually encapsulates the Groedel family's rise to nobility, their success in timber and trade, and their resilience in securing their legacy.

In 1905, they were elevated to "Baron" with a modified crest (Figure 19):

Baron Groedel von Gyulafalva und Bogdan

"Labor Bonae famae Gloriaeque pater est."
(Labor is the father of honor and glory)

Figure 19. Coat of Arms for their barony

This upgraded family crest reflects the Groedel family's elevation to baronial status, incorporating grander elements that emphasize nobility, power, and prestige. At the center, the shield remains divided into two sections. The left half continues to depict three evergreen trees atop rocky terrain, symbolizing the family's deep roots in the timber industry and their connection to the Carpathian forests. The right half features a sailing ship on open waters, representing trade, expansion, and commerce, likely alluding to their role in the shipping and transport of lumber and other cargo.

Above the shield, the crest has become more elaborate. The knightly helmet is now crowned with seven points, signifying their baronial title. Atop the crown, an armored arm wields a curved sword, reinforcing themes of strength, readiness, and noble responsibility. Black eagle wings flank the arm, a common heraldic sym-

bol of imperial favor, power, and high rank, linking their ennoblement to the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. Surrounding the shield are two golden griffins, newly added as supporters. With the body of a lion and the head and wings of an eagle, griffins symbolize courage, vigilance, and divine protection. Their inclusion elevates the family's status, suggesting both strength and guardianship over their legacy.

The mantling and decorative elements have also become more elaborate, with flowing red, blue, and gold drapery enhancing the crest's grandeur and emphasizing royal favor and aristocratic standing. A double crown now sits atop the shield, reinforcing baronial authority and imperial recognition. At the bottom, a Latin motto or family inscription is displayed, further solidifying their noble identity and values. This elevated coat of arms is far more intricate and majestic than the original, signaling the Groedel family's ascent into the aristocracy. The addition of griffin supporters, imperial eagle wings, and an upgraded crown visually asserts their enhanced prestige, influence, and noble responsibility within the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

The Groedels: Visionary Leaders of a Lumber Empire

The three brothers complemented each other well: Hermann was the woodsman, an aggressive, instinctive man who knew about money and people; Bernhard was the serious and calm engineer who was interested in railways, materials, and fieldwork; and Albert, who was a social man, said to be refined in ancient Jewish gentility, the "Bezichungsmench" [relationship man], who was extremely suitable for the social "management" of politicians, but who preferred to put the money he earned on the card table than in the green forest.

However incomplete or skewed, the stories, letters, and anecdotes bring us to the following conclusions: Baron Hermann Groedel was a devoted father, husband, grandfather, and an enormously gifted and successful businessman known fittingly as "King of the Hungarian Wood." His efforts, along with his brothers Bernhard and Albert, grew the Groedel Brothers into a massive wood empire begun by his father and uncle in Germany in the mid-19th century.

Before the stock market crash of 1929, a year before Hermann's death, Groedel Brothers, a privately-held timber business, was at its peak. At that

time, it had a value of between $2.5 - $3 billion in 2025 dollars and was arguably the largest lumber exporter in Europe. There is little doubt that the Groedel family was one of the wealthiest in the empire, if not all of Europe. One of Hermann's obituaries made this statement about his business philosophy:

"[Baron Hermann Groedel] was an imitator of a brilliant merchant idea: always accumulating enough debt with the banks to make the creditor's problem greater than the debtor's. No matter how much wealth he had, Hermann Groedel was always in debt to the banks, always doing business with the banks' money. In essence, the basis of his work, power, success, and wealth was that he could work with the banks' money to an incredible extent."[14]

As a young man, Hermann was brought into his father Zadig's company in Germany and eventually became the company accountant gaining expertise in business, finance, investing, and banking; some would include negotiating and understanding people to the list. After Zadig's passing in 1896, Hermann managed the business successfully through the shrewd use of bank loans. From his letters, Hermann implies that he learned much of his financial craft from his uncle Ludwig.

"...Now that I get around in the big world of haute finance, I only now see how quite extraordinarily dear our Uncle Ludwig is, the man holds the aptitude to be director of a big bank, ... I am proud of this my master..." (letter to Hermann Nussbaum, July 21, 1912)

"I hardly believe that there is another company in the country that enjoys credit with a bank. The Anglo bank has to take any amount of customer credit from us, and we have a huge acceptance credit, which is of enormous value to us in the past time and also in the future, because I am negotiating for a very large business - including real estate - and the interest fixed for years to come is extremely beneficial to me." [letter to Hermann Nussbaum December 23, 1907)

"...just recently I achieved one of my greatest financial successes when the Bahner Handelsgesellschaft provided me with very impressive bank credit. You and I still work with other people's money, that's where my grass has been for 20 years, ...

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[14] *A mármarosi fabáró gyászjelentéséhez*
(For the obituary of the wood baron from Marmaros), Ellenor, December 31, 1930

Owing money is an incredible power & I'm proud that a distinguished German bank is giving us such trust..." (letter to Hermann Nussbaum, July 21, 1912)

By 1900, years before the Groedels became ennobled in 1903 and titled in 1905, they had already gained significant influence in European political circles, as demonstrated by Hermann's earlier audience with the Romanian King and Queen.

[Budapesti Naplo; June 19, 1900]

Hungarians with the Romanian court. The newspaper La Romanie, published in Bucharest, reports that, among others, Armin Groedel and his wife, Melania Groedel, appeared at the latest hearing with King Charles and Queen Elizabeth. Their audience began on the occasion that Hermann Groedel, Bernat, and Albert, offered forty thousand francs to the charitable institution named Elisabeth Doamna, founded by the Romanian Queen, for which their majesties wanted to thank them. After the meeting, the Queen received the Groedel party in a private suite to express her gratitude to the donor. The reception lasted for an hour, and afterward, Mrs. Groedel was given a portrait of Queen Elisabeth with her signature as a memento.

When Zadig and the company were awarded the ten-year contract for harvesting the Máramaros forest in 1874, they already had a thriving timber business based in Regensburg, Germany. Although the value, size and scope of their German business is unknown, various advertisements and articles suggest that it was widespread and lucrative.

While some Hungarian newspaper accounts of the Groedel family's early history argue that Zadig was financially poor upon arriving, others contend the family was wealthy from their lumber business in Germany, as alluded to in Hermann's obituary at the top of this chapter. Stories of the early years claim that in 1879 the company almost went bankrupt before the flood in Szeged propelled them to success. Regardless, over their first twenty-five years in Hungary, Hermann had built an empire and amassed enough wealth to build four large steamers and a steamship company to deliver products on a global basis, acquire and enlarge numerous impressive properties in Máramarossziget, Skole, Kommando, and Budapest that still stand today, and host Europe's aristocracy on their exceptional hunting grounds in Skole and at

their mansions in Budapest and residences in Vienna. All had occurred before WWI, after which their wealth only accelerated through the 1920s until its downward slide began with the stock market crash in 1929 and Hermann's death the following year.

With his strong knowledge of finance and business, by 1916, Hermann was heavily invested in the stock market and expanding the business. The First World War and for several years prior, began a boom for wood products, significantly increasing wood production and prices. This rapid expansion created unprecedented opportunities for Hermann to acquire additional timber companies adding substantial production capacity. Hermann expanded the business quickly throughout the Carpathians, Galicia, Bukovina, Romania, Upper Hungary (Viso), and Transylvania. The company's exports had become such a large percentage of Europe's timber business that Hermann was able to set prices arbitrarily, building fantastic wealth for the company and the family.

Under Hermann, the Groedel Brothers had four steamships built in England named after each of their wives and Uncle Ludwig to transport products worldwide and still required more. In addition, the company had a majority interest in a wood industry bank and led the establishment of lumber consortiums, co-ops, and alliances while publishing a weekly timber-focused newspaper in Polish for two years. Hermann personally owned three mansions across Budapest, Máramarossziget, and Skole (more of an estate than a mansion), and property in Lviv; Bernhard owned an art nouveau mansion in Budapest next door to Hermann, which, at the time of this writing is owned by the Fidesz political party and is being used as their headquarters. They also owned a hunting lodge in Kommando near Covasna, and all three brothers owned myriad other properties in Hungary, Vienna, and Poland. Albert lived for many years in Vienna and had acquired a property called the "Sternberg Mansion." He later lived in Skole and Kommando.

From the company's immense size, wealth, and power, Hermann played a major role in the lumber industry, particularly during the 1910s and 1920s. He was the de facto leader of the wood industry in Central Europe from the late 19th century until his passing in 1930. He had close relationships with notable figures such as Emperor & King Franz Joseph I (Figure 20.), the king and queen of Romania, Hungarian Prime Minister István Tisza, other heads of state, poli-

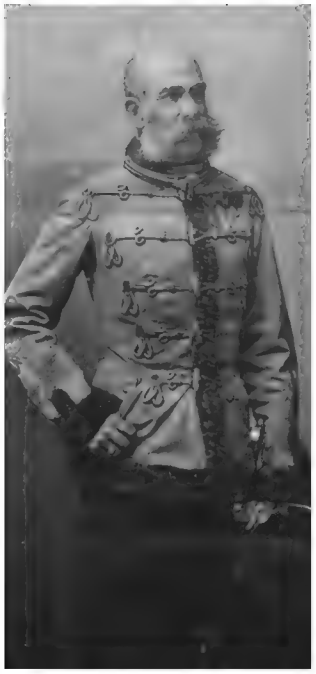


Figure 20.
Emperor &
King Franz Jozséf I. 1884

ticians, and financial leaders. Hermann was known for rescuing or acquiring struggling lumber companies to preserve jobs, even if they were his competitors' and even if he didn't take ownership.

Despite numerous philanthropic efforts by the brothers and their wives, including constructing and subsidizing hospitals, orphanages, and schools, assisting the impoverished, giving large amounts of money to the war effort, and creating tens of thousands of jobs, critics conveniently overlooked these contributions. Company and personal taxes were criticized as being too low. Following WWI, the family came under intense scrutiny from the Hungarian tax authorities and was required to pay an increased war profits tax of several million lei (Romanian currency). Hungarian authorities also attached their residences, including their Budapest home on Lendvay ut 26, and Bernhard's home next door at Arena ut 98 (today Dozsa Gyorgy ut 98.)

Some people accused the Groedel Brothers of being a monopoly that took advantage of weak or outdated laws and engaged in unethical practices. They were accused of using excessive political influence, bribing officials, stealing from the state treasury, taking advantage of the small and poor landowners, and deforesting the mountains. Their Hungarian and Romanian critics, who opposed logging or the manner and price in which the state was offering its public lands, blamed the Groedels for their governments' willingness to sell or lease public lands at unreasonably low prices (implying collusion), allowing the loggers and corrupt officials to reap the rewards, rather than the state and the local populace.

In 1906, a controversy arose when the Groedels were granted logging rights to a piece of land without a public auction. Transylvanian Saxon University, a public institution, wanted to sell some of its property to pay for various educational opportunities for the less fortunate and awarded the contract to the Groedel Brothers at a very low price. It was later questioned whether the university's land was publicly-owned, who controlled it, and whether the timber's value was assessed before the contract was awarded. Many believed that the timber was worth much more than the university's requested price, and the Groedels were allowed to pay off the contract over 40 years in 80 semi-annual installments, reducing its value over time to about one-fifth its sale price. Even today, this kind of agreement would be considered controversial as it negatively affects smaller timber companies not allowed to bid for such contracts, is overly generous, and questions would arise regarding the technical reasons for giving the contract to the

Groedels. This kind of contract is often known as a "no-bid" or "sole-source" agreement. It was alleged that there may have been exertion of undue influence or offers of inducements to the public university figures.

Pesti Hirlap, February 12, 1906 p6

It cannot be sanely suggested, and it is contrary to the care of the ordinary merchant, to offer half a million for a forest without survey and estimate. So far, the official answer to all inquiries has been that the estimation work has not yet been completed and that, once completed, it will be available to everyone. How is it that only one company managed to get to know this work, without which its offer would have been impossible?

Pesti Naplo, February 15, 1906 p16

Suspicious deals. The suspicious dealings of the executive government still keep interested parties in suspense. The government semi-official did provide some rebuttal regarding the Saxon University's forest in Hétbiró, but this rebuttal rejects the accusation in such a suspicious way that we are forced to regard the sale of the forest in Hétbiró by the Saxon University as a shameless gift to the Baron Groedels even more suspicious. According to the indictment, the Saxon University sold the forest in Hétbiró freely, without calling for a public tender, to the Groedel Brothers, as well as to the company founded by them, the Hungarian Export and Import Co., Ltd., and reached ten million kroner, which amount is to be paid interest-free in eighty semi-annual installments, i.e. over forty years, so that in today's value the purchase price barely corresponds to two million kroner. As you know, it has been a practice for many years that sales of forests under the government's supervision are not permitted other than through public auctions. The internal administrator, not the competent land development administrator, is speaking against this serious charge. According to the statement, a delegation went to Internal Affairs Executive Kristóffy with the request to allow the free sale of the university forests. For once, the semi-official is strikingly tight-lipped and does not say a single word about who led the delegation and who were the members of this delegation. This only proves that even if there was a deputation to visit the interior agent, its members could only come from the men appointed by Baron Groedel.

By March 22, the agricultural minister decided the forests would be sold at public auction. Additional information about the contract and the winning bid-

der is absent, but it seems that it was not the Groedels.

Although the company fiercely denied allegations of impropriety in the press when appropriate, a few cases remained contentious.

Arbiter-Zeitung, September 19, 1906

The Groedels, which had previously been enriched by harvesting the forests in the Marmaroser county, had explored Transylvania in 1894, where they founded the "Siebenbürger Forstindnstrie Aktiengesellschaft[15]".

The Groedel brothers own the companies, but since 1897 many colonizers and statesmen have figured as straw man shareholders of this company, among them the former Minister Hieronymi and Baron Feilitzsch, the State Secretary in the Vedö Ministry of Agriculture, in whose hands the management of Hungary's forestry was in charge, Potsa and Székely, Daniel, Lonyay, and Barta, and many others. With the support of even the courts, the Groedels are said to have obtained their forests from the Transylvania communities at ridiculous prices, and Zoltán Lengyel, a member of the Reichstag, is now claiming that around 20,000 people are constantly bribed by the Groedels during these activities. Many of these mercenaries earn special "merits" in the regulation of the land register and the arrondissements. Groedels' advocates were previously MEPs[16] Géza Polonyi and Dionys Sebess, who transferred his transgression to his son Geza Polonyi after Polonyi became Minister of Justice in the Coalition Ministry and appointed Dionys Sebess to head the specially organized Transylvanian judicial division.

Hermann's Heritage

Hermann was a person who elicited a variety of emotions from those around him, ranging from admiration, affection, and recognition to contempt, scorn, and vilification. Despite being renowned for his acts of generosity, people skills, and providing many thousands of jobs, he and the company were continually accused of various offenses by individuals who wanted the logging industry to just go away. The press was incessantly negative, especially in Romania, where at least one publication was banned from Hungary. Even today, in the 21st cen-

[15]*The Groedels didn't create the company. They acquired the business from David Horn and expanded it.*

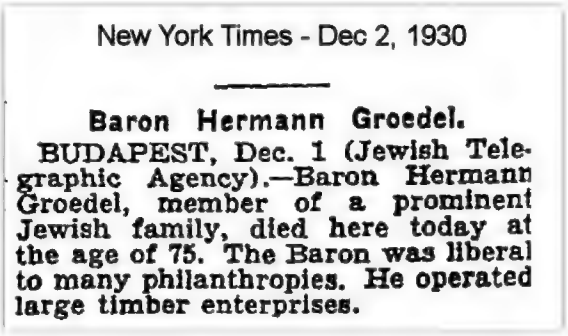
[16]*Member of parliament.*

tury, newspaper articles in Hungary and Romania discussing historical times continue to reference and sometimes vilify the family.

December 2019

...A family became wealthy, a few anointed officials became wealthy, the country, the state, and the people became poor.[17]

Over the years, journalists frequently disparaged Hermann's German-Jewish heritage, although he had obtained Hungarian citizenship in 1890. To many in the press, he was still considered a foreigner, taking away from the real Hungarians. After the rest of the family had converted from Judaism, Hermann followed at age 63 in 1919. Everyone understood it was for assimilation as this was common practice so the children could inter-marry and avoid anti-Semitism. Why Hermann converted so late at age 63 is a mystery. However, journalists and others ignored his conversion or used it against him as they saw fit. In practice, this author believes that Hermann was proud of his Jewish heritage; although was no longer practicing but wanted to avoid the anti-Semitism plaguing Hungary and Romania and targeted the wealthy.


New York Times - Dec 2, 1930

Baron Hermann Groedel.

BUDAPEST, Dec. 1 (Jewish Telegraphic Agency).—Baron Hermann Groedel, member of a prominent Jewish family, died here today at the age of 75. The Baron was liberal to many philanthropies. He operated large timber enterprises.

Some criticized Hermann for speaking German, his native language, instead of Hungarian. Some critics demanded he identify solely as Hungarian. Later in life, for primarily business reasons, Hermann became a Romanian citizen living with Melanie in Bucharest and Budapest, and was said to hold passports from Hungary, Romania, Poland, and possibly others. However, Hermann remained loyal to his German homeland and continued to support German and Jewish causes. Even after his death, in their obituaries, Jewish charitable organizations praised Hermann as a Jew for supporting their cause.

Contradicting this is the possibility that Hermann was in a way anti-Semitic himself, or at least wished to not be easily recognized as a Jew. This is explained by one statement Hermann made in his own handwriting, and an accusation made by Orthodox Jews. In the first instance, in a letter to his cousin, Hermann Nussbaum, Baron Hermann mentioned that his cousin's son "*was fortunate*

[17]*A Groedel családról [About the Groedel Family], Háromszék, December 2019, by Ferency L. Tibor*

because he didn't look Jewish," and in an 1889 news story about a sawmill fire in Máramarossziget started by lightning, "***Some of the Orthodox Jews spread the word that lightning struck the factory because Herman Groedel (who is himself a Jew) does not tolerate Jews wearing caftans and sideburns, the so-called Galician Jews, working in the factory.***[18]"

From the Fővárosi Lapok, September 10, 1890...

The new citizen. Ármin Groedel, the boss of the big sawmill in Marmaros, the head of the "Groedel brothers" company, became a Hungarian citizen. The well-known company has been in Hungary for many years and was the first citizen of Marmaros to pay 14,000 frt in taxes, and even then he was still a foreigner, a non-voting resident of the county, the town. Now he is finally a Hungarian citizen. On this occasion, Ármin Groedel wrote a long letter to János Lónyay, the county lord, explaining the reasons and the difficulties he had to overcome before he could be released from his native land and join his new Hungarian homeland. In addition to the patriotic letter, he donated 1,000 forints to the foundation of the new hospital being built in the county, and wishes to show this donation under the name of "Melanie Groedel Foundation" because he wishes to mention the name of the woman with whom he has found his happiness and who, as a true Hungarian countrywoman, was the main promoter of the fact that his heart was drawn closer to his new homeland and now hangs on it with all his love. Already a year ago, Ármin Groedel gave 3000 frt. to the hospital being built in the county and continues to donate to all charitable causes, promote education, help the suffering, and his wife, Mistress Melania Groedel-Weiner, with her kindness and mercy, helps quietly and silently.

An excerpt from an obituary gives us a bit more insight into his personality.[19]

No one ever knew for sure about Baron Hermann Groedel. He was a man who kept his heart in his mouth; his eloquence knew no bounds, and yet the world knew only as much of his business, his plans, and his intentions as his aristocracy required. He discussed and explained, commanding the room in which he resided with a graceful gesture. Speaking of himself almost always in the third person, he emphasized in every other sentence that honesty and openness were the most characteristic qualities of 'der Groedel', because 'der Groedel', or 'ein Groedel', was incapable of lying.

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[18]*Nemzet, July 23, 1889*

[19]*A mármarosi fabáró gyászjelentéséhez, Ellenor, December 31, 1930*

Perhaps it goes without saying that he always lied. The opposite was never true of anything he said. He did not practice deception in a sporting way but under the compulsion of a genius merchant's imagination. What he did not want today, he could want tomorrow. Sometimes, what he lied about turned out to be true. He used this bluff, as the truth-teller, only as a last resort, of course, but always with success. But the driving force of his character and his career was the insecurity he spread around him. "I am not willing to risk anything to be specific," he once said when someone cornered him and demanded a precise answer. In that sentence was the secret of Hermann Groedel's entire life, which he carried with him from the only certainty, the place of his birth, the village of Friedberg in Hesse, to the precarious family tomb.

The Romanian paper, Egalitata, In 1905:

Distinctions. The Groedel brothers, about whose elevation to the Hungarian title of hereditary baron, I have communicated in a previous issue of 'Equality' their extensive business in Romania. Baron Hermann de Groedel is the director and main shareholder of the Societa' Anonime Române for Industry, a very important company, which for ten years has been developing forests in different parts of Romania and which transports its enormous production on its own ships from the ports of Galati and Constanta to almost all the wood importing countries of Europe, Africa and Asia. Baron Hermann de Groedel, head of the Groedel Brothers firm, was recently decorated by His Majesty, King Charles with the order of "Steaua Române[20]"', rank of officer. He was also proclaimed honorary citizen of Máramarossziget, and one of the town's streets was given the name of Groedel. [Note: this author has not found a street named "Groedel" in Máramarossziget. It might have been temporary or replaced.]

Note: The national order "Steaua Românie ("Star of Romania") is the highest distinction offered by the Romanian state.

[20]*Star of Romania*

About the Critics

Journalists typically sided with the working class and subsistence farmers whose sources of livelihood were devastated by the timber industry's deforestation. Reforestation laws were lax or non-existent, but even reforestation would take many years to become productive. With the forest gone, the local populace could no longer gather food like mushrooms, berries and animals or collect firewood and material for crafts, and they were beholden to the logging companies for low-paying and dangerous jobs or pressured to sell their timberland at bargain prices. The industry not only took away their way of life and the beauty they had cherished for generations but provided little compensation in return. At the same time, the loggers, and some politicians, profited handsomely.

The post-socialist timber boom was not the first in the history of (the Carpathians), however. Around 1850, large-scale commercial forestry emerged for the first time in the Carpathians, driven not by domestic elites but by foreign capitalist entrepreneurs seeking to expand the European forest frontier into new territory. In Vrancea, the forest rush arrived during the late nineteenth century with catastrophic consequences. In a few decades, the Vrancea Mountains (adjacent to the Groedel property in Covasna/Comandau) became the most degraded landscape of Romania, "Saharan desert-like." Approximately six foreign enterprises extracted timber there through concessions from rightsholding local communities. Because the terrain was unsuitable for timber flotation, the companies built narrow-gauge steam railways and cable hoists. They carried timber westward across the mountains into Transylvania and eastward to sawmills and to the harbor of Galati. Local elites became rich from intermediating the forest concessions and the sale of commoners' rights. Those commoners, driven by poverty, sometimes sold their forest rights for a pack of cigarettes, signing contracts that they were unable to read. The timber barons of the time were the capitalist business owners, some of them holding actual baron titles (e.g., Baron Groedel, one of the wealthiest members of the prewar Jewish aristocracy in the late Austro-Hungarian Empire). Local elites were mere middlemen, called "axe handles," suggesting that elites betrayed their fellow villagers and wrought their extortion, just like wooden handles wronged the forests they were made of. In 1925, peasants from Tulnici complained to the county prefect about the company called Union; they lamented destructive cutting, exceeding the terms of the contract, appalling deals between the company and local notables, the swindling of

payments by the latter, and threats of lawsuits. Locals did not work for the companies. Workers from Transylvania were brought in and camped in forestry enclaves. Most people from Tulnici lived as shepherds, petty timber cutters, and merchants, bartering timber for food in the regional markets. After 1925, the companies were forced to downsize by unfavorable circumstances: the war, the Great Depression, restrictive forestry policies, resistance from commoners, and pro-peasant politicians. The massive extractions and the abuse of peasants' rights are remembered today with bitterness, however, and some people narrate a familiar tale: the return of the predatory axe handles.[21]

The people and journalists used the press to fight back, and from time to time, they had some successes in preventing the sale or logging of a region. In one case in Máramarossziget, the Groedel company fought the government for fifty years to log the Upper Viso region, part of public lands. Although the Romanian Supreme Court finally approved the sale, newly elected officials, without proper cause and reportedly shortsighted, nullified the contracts. This caused the county to lose the hundreds of jobs and the tax revenue the agreements would have provided, and the people were left to pay for the many lawsuits brought by the timber companies due to the arbitrary and allegedly illegal nullification.

In 1935, the politician who nullified the agreement discussed his reasoning:

Universul March 11, 1935

Draft law on cooperation Speech by Ion Mihalache

D. L MIHALACHE reveals a series of cases of pseudo-cooperation.

I saw - when I was a minister - one of the most famous shows. A forest of beautiful trees in the Vișeului mountains, worth 45 million Iei, which had been planted 80 years ago, was devastated to the ground, in the name of some fictitious cooperatives in Vișeu, in the name of some trade schools in Satul-Mare, in the name of some companies, "Elefantul" and in the name of some invalids. All of them had the Groedel house on their backs. I went to the cooperative in the village, to the office and, with my experience as a former controller at the People's Bank, in 20 minutes I found that this cooperative had never carried out any logging operations and that

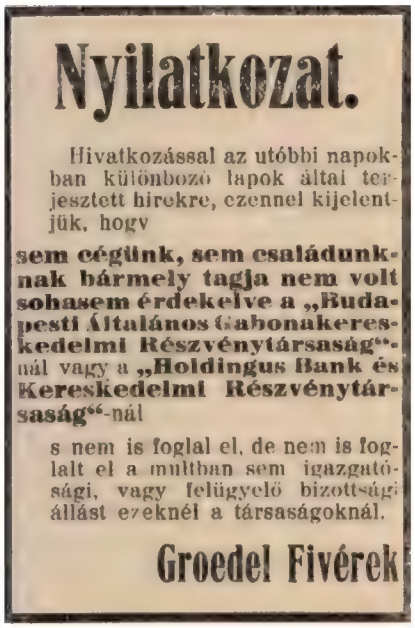
[21]*The Rise and Fall of a Timber Baron: Political Forests and Unruly Coalitions in the Carpathian Mountains of Romania: Monica Vasile: 2019*

each of the 12 leaders had deposited 100,000 lei from Groedel, had set up a receipt and the money had been deposited elsewhere, so that it would not be returned to them until they had taken possession of this forest.

We cancelled the contract and disbanded this cooperative.

During the 1920s, the Romanian press continually berated the Groedels for their logging efforts and for taking advantage of the land use laws, which desperately needed modernization. There was also plenty of anti-Semitism. Additionally, several Hungarian articles implied that the Groedels were involved in shady dealings or bankruptcies in businesses outside the wood industry. In those cases, the Groedels would respond:

Clipping 11.
Az Ujság, December 6, 1924



Nyilatkozat.

Hivatkozással az utóbbi napokban különbözó lapok által terjesztett hirekre, ezennel kijelentjük, hogy

sem cégünk, sem családunknak bármely tagja nem volt sohasem érdekelve a „Budapesti Általános Gabonakereskedelmi Részvénytársaság"-nál vagy a „Holdingus Bank és Kereskedelmi Részvénytársaság"-nál

s nem is foglal el, de nem is foglalt el a multban sem igazgatósági, vagy felügyelő bizottsági állást ezeknél a társaságoknál.

Groedel Fivérek

Statement.

Concerning the news spread by various newspapers in recent days, we hereby declare that ***neither our company nor any member of our family has ever had an interest in "Budapest General Grain Trading Company" or "Holdingus Bank and Trading Joint-Stock Company"*** *and does not hold, and has not held in the past, a board or supervisory board position job with these companies.*

Groedel Brothers

This was in response to the following article that implied the Groedels were involved with an institution in bankruptcy that had previously taken over a grain company.

Róbert Bösel, the famous Viennese war leader, whose position has fluctuated considerably in the last year, also has a commodity bank in Budapest: the Budapest general grain trading joint-stock company, located at Nádor utca 34, opposite the stock exchange, whose insolvency we reported in yesterday's issue. This joint-stock company was founded about a year ago with a share capital of half a billion, taking over the plant of the local grain company Molnár és Vidtor. In addition to Bosel, who

participated in the development, the "Holdingus bank and trading joint stock company" was started in the same building two years ago, which was initially the bank of the Groedel brothers...

After the company's response, the following was published, showing how the game was played. There seems to be little difference between how business was conducted in the 1920s and today.

Magyarság, December 10, 1924, p14

Those who deny as long as they can, but pay when they have to. The BÁGER case has an... interestingly strange twist: the participation of the Groedels. When the failed grain control broke out, and the first reports were made about BAGER and Holdingus, the creditors looked forward to the developments calmly, because they knew that no matter how big the difference, whether it was 15 or 25 billion, the damage would be done and pay off, it has to pay off, because people who have money and who can pay, if they want to, are interested in the speculation that ended badly.

The calm creditors did not only think of János Sváb but mainly and primarily of the Groedels, the wood barons, who have such a huge fortune that 15 or 25 billion is a pittance in reality. Baron Herman Groedel, however, was quick to deny the scandal as soon as it broke out. This appeared to be most reasonable outwardly, it was the most obvious formality, even if it could not touch the essence in the end result.

In a German-language daily newspaper, a very firm statement by the company Groedel Brothers appeared in a striking form, informing everyone who is concerned or interested that the company is not interested in the Budapest Grain Trading Company or the Holdingus Bank. Baron Groedel could easily issue this statement because it is true that the Groedel Brothers do not have a direct interest in any of the companies. Groedel Brothers is a timber production company that does not deal with grain trading or banking, and the company itself is not interested in BAGER, neither as a shareholder nor as a board member. However, this statement is just a play on words and forms a careful and forward-looking defense in case you don't have to pay after all.

The Groedel Brothers are not really interested in BÁGER and the Holding, but Baron Groedel Herman's two sons-in-law, János Sváb[22] and Baron Königswarter[23], are very interested, so it would be difficult to deny the interest, in case you have to pay, because the thrifty and the cautious wood baron cannot leave his two sons-in-law in such a big financial scandal without any help. In any case, old Groedel denied it,

[22]*Iren's husband*

[23]*Stefania's husband*

he mainly refused any association with the troubled companies, and when it was explained to him that this thing was not going so smoothly, he honestly stated that he would pay, but only if he had to. He insisted that his confidant, his intimate finance expert, review the books, which was done. This audit found out that there was no abuse in the BÁGER case, they simply speculated badly, and the consequences of that speculation must be borne. This finding had an effect, it even stirred the spirit of Baron Groedel, who was equipped for harsh negotiations, and based on the audit results, it was decided that they would pay.

Now the only debate is on whether others should pay, and the question to be decided is who should pay how much. However, there is no doubt that Baron Groedel will pay. Maybe not directly, but since the creditors don't even insist on this, they don't want Baron Groedel's money but their own, and they don't research who they get it from.

Additional detail was published on December 13...

Losses of mills at BAGER. The Budapest Alt. Grain Trading Company is still under negotiation; an agreement seems to have been reached, it is only a question of the proportion of the ten billion to be paid, about half of the losses by János Sváb...

On January 14, 1925, the Romanian newspaper, Gazeta Transilvaniei, published the excerpt below, focusing on their anti-Semitism and scapegoating the Groedels for their politicians' actions.

The instinct of the people feels the great dangers. The news that Groedel is returning to Maramureş filled with horror by the Romanians who sought to prevent the danger. The elder's reason: "Groedel Hermann the old man came to Maramureş with 60,000 florins and was taken out by the king with 400 million crowns. When he came, there were 5% Jews in the county, when he left, 30% Jews remained."

Others fear the bribery power through which the spies enslave even the provinces. The Saxons were only tricked by the agents of the Groedel brothers from "Fabank[24]", so that the university's forest was sold for 16 million gold crowns cheaper than they bought it ...

Romanian anti-Semitism and anti-Hungarianism was rampant in the 1920s, shown by the following excerpt, again, in the Gazeta Transilvaniei on December 9, 1925:

On November 18, the "Commercial Bank from Maramureş" was established in

[24]*Fabank was a wood industry bank in which the Groedels held a majority stake.*

Sighet. The following were elected as directors: Groedel's lawyer Dr. Barna Filip and Urda Ion, former head of Sguranța, the administrative director was the Jew Vânat Lefrov. After receiving the authorization, the bank will seek connections with the Central Bank".

The new bank is not only proof of the Jewish mentality but of their morals, and through it, Barons Groedel will mask their expansion in the county as with the Jewish "Banca Centraia" before, where the management was completed with a few renegades, today in charge. This bank is the tenth enterprise of the Mihalyi family, after nine failed. Banking protectionism in Maramureș is regaining its reputation in Hungary.

Over the years, many newspapers criticized the company, with the Romanians being the most belligerent. Many Romanians were nationalistic and did not want "foreigners" harvesting their forests, public or private, and felt it was a form of thievery, so some organizations resorted to inflated and unsubstantiated claims of tax evasion, bribery, and fraud.

Magyarország, December 31, 1905

The work of a Hungarian baron in the Romanian public eye.
- From our own correspondent.
Budapest, 30 December.
For months now the Romanian press has been reporting unheard-of things about Baron Groedel. They have been calling a Hungarian nobleman like Kristóffy the sort of titles that are only used to describe common villains. The "Prezentál" and "Epoca" [newspapers] wrote: "Since the Groedel family set foot in Romania, we have been struck by a veritable plague of God. These people are a menace to the country, exploiting the peasantry and endangering public security." ('Prezentul', No. 180.) Also in No. 188 of this newspaper, he continues: 'The Groedel brothers are plundering our most beautiful forests by fraud and robbery. Everyone is now aware of the great national, social, and moral danger threatening this country by the Groedel brothers.

The result of the series of articles in the "Prezental" was that the government removed Goya Constantinescu, the prefect (archbishop) of Putna. This illustrious gentleman, says the 'Epoca' (No. 295), was a paid man of the Groedels, through whose intercession they were able to buy the forests from the peasants there at a bargain price, and sometimes even forests which had already belonged to others; the timber was then

hastily cut down, and when the matter came to a head, the loser was always the old owner. In the "Epoca" newspaper, a letter from a Munich man named Mayr to Gogu Constantinescu, who wants to buy forests in Romania and asks the prefect to mediate for him in return for a suitable reward. This man of excellent character, whose honesty is known abroad, lost his job after the intercepted letter was published. But while he was prefect, he had done everything for Baron Groedel and, as mediator and lawyer in one, he pocketed the large gratuity. The Romanian press describes the Groedel-Constantinescu conspiracy's dealings as adventurers, bandits, and eye-catchers.

The Prezentul continues to fight with heated ruthlessness against the Groedel family, whose affairs in Hungary it also airs. It reports the Groedels' activities in Máramaros County based on the "Máramarosi Lapok", but now it excludes the events in the county of Háromszék, based on the documents found at the court in Handdivásárhely. On the one hand, the "Mármaros Papers", on the other hand, after the judgments of the courts, "Prezentul" shows that the Groedels in Hungary enriched themselves by bribery, fraud, concealment of crimes, breach of contract, tax evasion (e.g. the income of the workers' canteens is put at 16,000 crowns, but it was more than 150,000), smuggling, rape and false accounting. The same means are now being used in Romania, "but we are defending ourselves against them with the most drastic means and are doing all we can to stigmatise the Groedel brothers" ("Prezentul", No 180).

In Tulna, in Romania, the Groedels have formed two joint-stock companies, 'Forestiera Romana' and 'Latrul'; of course, all the shares are in their pockets. The board of directors comprises leading men of each party: if one party fails, the other must defend the two joint-stock companies. One's mind boggles when one reads in the Romanian newspapers what deals the 'Forestiera Romana' and 'Latrul', or, as the Romanian press puts it, the Barons Groedel and their allies, have been able to do. According to the Romanian newspapers, the Groedels advertise time and again that they can buy everyone in Romania with money; they bought the barony in Hungary with money and they can buy the whole world in Romania with money. And this is easier in Romania than 'buying a public woman in the streets of Budapest.'

The joint action of forest owners and the press in Romania was not without success. The boards of directors of the two joint-stock companies, who still have patriotic feelings and love for the common people, are in a hurry to escape. Harret, the former Minister of Public Education, has written a very fine book on the peasant question in

Romania and more recently, Kogalinceanu. Both writers emphasize forestry, which represents considerable wealth in Romania. These studies form the basis of the reform Romania intends to introduce in the forestry sector, which will be discussed during the current parliamentary cycle. During these negotiations, the Putna deputy Virnau-Ernészt will also be speaking, and he will be giving a detailed account of the Groedels' affairs. We will therefore have the opportunity to hear the characterization in the Romanian Parliament of a Hungarian baron whom the Fejérváry government made a lord. In Romania, there is little affectation for the foreigner. And it is not impossible, or at least that is what the Romanian newspapers want, that the Groedels - who were made barons in Hungary for their economic activities - will simply be expelled from Romania. Happy Romania!

The Groedel Brothers firm responded:

Magyarsag, January 2, 1906, p11

On Sunday, the Romanian newspapers "Epoca" and "Prezentul" published an article entitled "The Hungarian Baron's Affair before the Romanian Public", which deals with the alleged abuses of the Groedel family in Romania. In this connection, the company's board of directors has now asked me to state the following: 'The announcement of the Romanian newspapers in Hungary, which was published in the autumn of last year, is untrue and slanderous from the beginning, and was inserted in the Romanian newspapers by opponents of the company for business and private interests.

In any case, one of the papers is banned from Hungary, and its hostility toward Hungarian companies is well known.

This paper uses every opportunity to show its hatred of Hungarians and does not shy away from making totally unfounded accusations and allegations against Hungarian industrialists. As for the facts of the case concerned in the statement itself, they are as follows. The company has extensive forestry operations in Romania, including the Romanian timber company Lotru and Sarpis, which it owns and which has made significant forest acquisitions in recent years. In Romania, the land registry is so disorganized that many owners do not know the extent and boundaries of their property. Consequently, disputes and redundancies are commonplace - almost unavoidable - in forest acquisitions. In such cases, the courts decide the dispute. The company's opponents have tried to influence these court decisions through the press, and these articles have been published, but to no avail. The company stands based on

law and conducts business according to solid principles. The board of directors of the "Sarpis" wood industry company is composed of the most prestigious men in Romania, including the former Minister of Foreign Affairs and Justice, Alexander Marghiloman, the former Minister of the Interior, Vasil Lescar, and the former President of the Chamber of Commerce, Pherikyde, whose participation in the board of directors is the most striking proof of the baselessness of the articles just published. The company's timber companies in Romania enjoy the highest protection and support from the Romanian government, which treats foreign entrepreneurs like its own subjects.

TIMBER PRODUCTION

Fabank

During 1916, the financial sections of the Budapest newspapers reported a significantly steady increase in the share price of ***Fabank*** (German: Holzbank - Wood Bank), better known as the ***Credit Institute of Hungarian Wood Traders***. It was eventually revealed that Hermann had acquired large blocks of shares in the company, driving up prices almost daily. Hermann aimed to acquire a majority stake and take over the bank as it had ownership in numerous profitable timber-producing companies. As expected, the bank's existing management tried to avoid a takeover by increasing the number of shares, thus diluting Hermann's ownership. It didn't work, and Hermann was able to insert several board members, including his nephew, Dr. Jenő Hilb, son of his sister, Bertha.

Népszava, May 14, 1916

"Hungarian wood producers and wood traders founded a separate financial institution about ten years ago called "Fabank" for short. It recently increased its share capital from 5 million kroner to 10 million kroner. The shares of this institute, which finances numerous wood-producing companies, have risen rapidly in recent weeks: the shares with a nominal value of 200 kroner are now 336 kroner, so much higher than the dividends paid. Everything will find a buyer for the shares on the market, and the buyer is none other than the Groedel company. According to news, the management of Fabank has already agreed with the Groedel company that at the next general meeting, two board members and one supervisory board member will be chosen from the people of the Groedel company. In this way, this institute and a large part of the Hungarian wood production and trade will come under the influence of the Groedels, to the great detriment of the Hungarian wood processing industry and the entire construction industry."

The last part of the final sentence is more of an opinion and not necessarily what occurred. However, the Groedel company was entering an industry consolidation that it controlled – meaning the ability to set prices as desired. Increasing prices would have a noticeable impact on the construction business, but it helped stabilize the timber industry and was not inescapably detrimental, as implied.

A little over a year later, the following article was published by the same newspaper, demonstrating that the wood industry was changing and the natural price increases due to consolidation, although above the cartel price, were not

as significant a detriment as previously opined, although the wording continues its overemphasis. The price increases didn't seem to stall wood sales as growth and profitability continued through the end of the 1920s.

Népszava, March 18, 1917

"Magyar Bank, Fabank —Groedel timber production syndicate. The monopoly efforts that have been taking place in the Hungarian timber market for a few years are slowly leading to the fact that the entire Hungarian timber industry will be consolidated into a syndicate based on a community of interest. Since Groedel's company Fabank found each other, Fabank has continuously increased its capital and expanded its power to new steam saws. This week another big step was taken toward a complete merger. Magyar Bank, which has a very prestigious interest in wood, established a joint venture with Fabank. According to the news, the two companies will remain completely independent from each other, but Magyar Bank will also participate in Fabank's newest share capital increase—from 20 million to 30 million. Naturally, as a result of this development, the old cartels of wood producers, Standard and Carpatia, begin to become redundant; the Magyar Bank-Fabank-Groedel interest association holds such a large part of the production in its hands that it can dictate the prices. It already does. Lately, they are asking 70 fils, 1 crown, even 1.50K per cubic meter above the cartel price. In such circumstances, the cartel only apparently sets the prices, but it is the same as with the ironworks: each producer asks for as much as he can extort from the distressed customers for his goods."

A Fakereskedelem (The Timber Trade), March 3, 1917

"The Hungarian Bank [Magyar Bank] and the Association of the Bank of Hungary [Fabank]. *As a supplement to the notice published in our Bulletin, we have the following to say on this matter.*

The creation of the joint venture has caused a sensation in the timber and timber trading circles because even the most informed, and even the majority of the board members, were unaware of the important transaction in the pipeline. The idea of a joint venture between Fabank and Magyar Bank probably arose from the Mich timber deal, in which Groedel and Magyar Bank had a joint interest. The foundations for a further community of interest followed almost naturally from this situation.

The Fabank group and Magyar Bank's interest in the timber industry together formed the dominant group in the Hungarian timber trade, which, in the event of a merger, would have the advantage of ensuring that the banks would not be able to lower export prices in export transactions without competing with each other, which was also a vitally important interest from a currency point of view.

It should be noted that Magyar Bank has a very substantial interest in the timber industry, so that in the past and in recent years it has more or less included in its business Kisküküllővölgyi Faipar r.t., Marosvölgyi Fatermelő r.t., K Kisjenői Fatermelő r.t., Hazai Erdőipar r.t., Óbeszterczei Forest Industry Ltd, Borsóörményesi Wood Industry Ltd, and in this year's report the newly acquired interests include the forestry and sawmills of Count Mikes[25] of Zaboda with a capital of five million crowns, and the Hungarian Forest and Wood Company Ltd. It cannot be ruled out that Fabank will also take over the technical and commercial management of those companies which are still in the interest of Magyar Bank.

It should be pointed out that the planned capital increase of Fabank from SEK 20 million to SEK 30 million will also involve Magyar Bank."

Magayorszag, May 6, 1916

Groedel's wood trust. The timber companies are experiencing a certain unease, and the Groedel company has made no secret of its ambition to take advantage of the favorable economic climate for timber companies, which is now and will be even more likely in the future, to set up a timber trust. The acquisition of the Kalotaszeg timber company marked the start of the Groedels' campaign, and they are now negotiating with a number of other companies to form a trust. The Groedels have so far purchased some 6.000 shares in the wood trust, and the purpose of this purchase is to enable the wood trust to carry out the financial, if not the banking, tasks of the Groedel trust, and to take care of the administrative financial arrangements. The tendency is always to exert a price-determining influence on the market. The Groedels are mobilizing their millions to take advantage of the favorable economic situation of the timber companies and to dictate market prices.

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[25]*Count Mikes was a long-term competitor of the Groedels, which years before included a small war between the companies. According to this article, the Groedels now owned the Zaboda tract of Count Mikes' timber business, but not the bulk of the company.*

The acquisition and consolidation process continued:

Az Est, July 18, 1917

"Magyar Bank sold its shares in Fabank. As Fabank's shares rose on the stock exchange, the Groedels kept accumulating their holdings, becoming Fabank's largest shareholders. Later on, the Groedel company transferred part of its shareholding to Magyar Bank, so that the Groedel share capital was now held by two companies, the Groedel Company and Magyar Bank. More recently, Magyar Bank has put Fabank's shares on the market and sold most of them. The shares placed on the market were taken over by Fabank's CEO, Aladár Fónagy, and his associates. Magyar Bank's stake in Fabank was thus substantially reduced, and the majority of Fabank's shares were acquired by the Fónagy-Groedel group." Népszava. September 23, 1917

"The expansion of Fabank.

Fabank, currently majority-owned by Groedel and Magyar Bank, continues to expand. It is now taking over Transylvanian Forest Industry Ltd, owned by the Groedel family, which this time is increasing its share capital from 2.5 million to 10 million. How much of this will be the Groedel's "founding profit" is something only very knowledgeable people could say."

To clarify, Transylvania Forest Industry Ltd., is the Groedel business in Kommando (Comandau) that was acquired by the Groedels in 1897 and primarily run by Bernhard. Therefore, Hermann was selling his Kommando business to a holding company (Fabank) that he controlled, continuing to maintain control of the Kommando business yet making a large profit from the sale. However, further articles noted that the idea was subsequently dropped. It's not clear whether the transaction was ever completed.

Shortly after Hermann's death in 1930, the following was published in Aradi Kozlony on December 5, 1930.

"A special mention must be made of the transactions that Groedel Hermann conducted on the Budapest Stock Exchange. The most memorable of these was the so-called Fabank transaction in the first years of the war. When Aladár Fónagy, sensing the coming economic boom in wood, united the country's large wood companies under his Fabank brand, Groedel Hermann saw a competitor in this financial insti-

tution and secretly started buying Fabank shares on the stock exchange. He started buying their shares at 220 crowns and continued until the share price rose to 1,000 crowns. At that time, he already had a majority stake, but later on, he sold his interest at a significant profit."

As alluded to above, Hermann finally sold his interest in Fabank in late 1919 to an Italian-French-English group led by Banca Commerciale Italiana with the creation of Foresta, a Milan-based joint stock company to take over the Institute's timber interests. Mr. Aladár Fónagy, former CEO of Fabank who partnered with Hermann in Fabank's ownership, was unanimously elected Chairman of the new Foresta Board on the proposal of Dr. Jenő Hilb, Vice-Chairman and Hermann's nephew.

The next large transaction was in Asia-Minor (Turkey), which could have transformed the Groedel business into a worldwide powerhouse. However, it's been difficult to ascertain the actual value of the acquisition.

Pesti Napló, December 9, 1917

"The Groedel Group's forest transaction in Asia Minor. Negotiations between the Turkish government and the Groedel Group on the exploitation of Kilisian forests have been ongoing for some time. We are now informed that these negotiations have reached an advanced stage. The Turkish government has made the establishment of an independent Turkish joint stock company a condition."

Pesti Naplo, February 16, 1918

"Groedel's forestry business in Turkey.

They report from Constantinople. The Turkish government has leased the right to harvest state forests in Asia Minor's Kastamuni vilayet and Abol sandjak to a Turkish joint-stock company for fifty years, in which the Groedel company will have the controlling role. — Fantastic news is circulating in the Budapest market about the great proportions of this business. Professionals quote Hermann Groedel's amusing statement that "compared to this business, Fabank is nothing, Magyar bank is nothing, Groedel is nobody." That is, the old Groedel, before the Kisússiai business."

Hermann thought this agreement to harvest the timber in Turkey would profit

the company more than any other and, in comparison, make earlier acquisitions look small. The Groedel company would own 50% of the shares in the joint-stock company. Of course, Fabank would help finance the transaction. Hermann had his hand in almost every cookie jar.

In time, the deal began to fall apart due to the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the change in the government from Istanbul to Ankara in 1923, which forced the British to pull out, as the new government was unwilling to be under the financial domination of the French or British. They rejected investments from the Allied powers. It was clear that the government in Ankara would not ratify agreements by the former Ottoman government but would regard all such concessions as up for renegotiation.

"The Angora people," in the words of Baron Herman Groedel, *"are not disposed to leave affairs of larger economic importance to members of the European great powers, whereas we had the distinct impression of a certain friendly advance towards neutral capital." Indeed, he had found the Ankara government quite clear on this desire not to conduct business with capital from the great European powers, an impractical and unintelligent attitude, if comprehensible.*[26]

Ankara's hardline approach to British capital directly impacted British commercial concerns in the Republic's early years. The new government was "intractable in the cases of all British concessions submitted for its consideration, and...is prepared to delay the negotiations indefinitely." Such hostility forced the British Trade Corporation, for example, to pull out of the Kastamonu-Bolu timber concession in 1924, for the Groedels could not afford to have the British Trade Corporation in any way involved in the concession if they were to be successful in their negotiations with Ankara. In this context, it is perhaps interesting that Ankara was actively negotiating with other Austro-Hungarian and German firms for other forestry concessions in the south of Turkey.

A further factor important for the Groedels was that it would not be the National Bank of Turkey putting up the guarantee but a Swiss bank, le Comptoir national d'Escompte of Geneva, whose reputation it was to be hoped would not give rise to any suspicions of British involvement. The British Trade Corporation, aware of the "present-day tendencies" in Ankara, acknowledged the po-

[26]*Money and politics: the fate of British business in the new Turkish Republic, by Kate Fleet, Turkish Historical Review 2 (2011) 18-38*

sition, accepting that their continued collaboration with Baron Groedel could do him harm in the negotiations and even jeopardize them. In May 1924, in his letter to Baron Groedel announcing the British Trade Corporation's withdrawal from the venture, Lord Faringdon, director of the British Trade Corporation, noted that "we have been impressed by the evidence reaching us from every side of the present unpopularity of everything British in Angora circles."

Ultimately, it appears that the company was finally able to consummate the agreement as noted in an article penned in September 1924 by Hugo Bruckmann, who had visited the US in 1922 with Baron Richard (see the chapter "Richard Groedel").

DEVELOPING LARGE TIMBER CONCESSIONS IN ASIA MINOR

The Timberman

September, 1924

DEVELOPMENT of a tract of timber near the shores of the Black Sea, in Asia Minor, containing from one hundred and fifty to two-hundred-cubit meters of merchantable timber, equaling between thirty and forty billion feet, will be undertaken by Baron Hermann Groedel, of the well-known firm of Groedel Company, with headquarters in Budapest, Hungary. This company is now operating several sawmills in Poland and Roumania. In a very interesting letter to The Timberman written from Constantinople, Turkey, by Mr. Hugo Bruckmann, an Austrian engineer, whose home is in Vienna, Austria, and who visited the Pacific Coast two years ago, accompanied by Baron Richard Groedel, a son of Baron Hermann Groedel, investigating the American methods of lumbering, we learn:

"The seat of the Turkish government is Angora. Baron Groedel has concluded his contract with the Turkish government concerning the forest concessions which he possessed prior to the war.

"The timber is composed of a mixed stand of softwoods and hardwoods. Logs will run up four and five feet. The contract covers fifty years. Probably six mills will be erected. The concession embraces a territory about 120 by thirty miles wide. Logging railroads will be built to transport the logs. It is the intention to combine American, Scandinavian and European methods in manufacturing and logging. Geared locomotives, donkey engines and American band mills will

be purchased. The balance of the machinery will be largely of German type. It is the intention to secure American sawmill and logging superintendents. The topography of the country is excellent, with a favorable climate. Operation and low stumpage cost make the investment a very desirable one. The Groedel Company enjoys business connections in England and is one of the oldest and largest lumber firms in Europe."

"In the United States we are sometimes prone to overlook the fact that there are other sections of the world which have undeveloped timber resources besides our own, such as this project in Asia Minor, to be developed by Groedel Company. The control of a tract of timber containing thirty to forty billion feet of timber equals, with one exception, the largest single private timber holding in the United States. Here an opportunity will be afforded the American logging and sawmill engineers to prove their mettle in helping develop this big undertaking. The world is not so large. Neither are all the natural resources located in one hemisphere."

Trianon's Impact

The Treaty of Trianon was and continues to be a significant burden to Hungary since the end of WWI. The treaty caused Hungary to lose two-thirds of its territory and half its population. New international borders separated its industrial base from raw materials and markets for agricultural and industrial products. *Hungary's timber resources were reduced by 84 percent.*

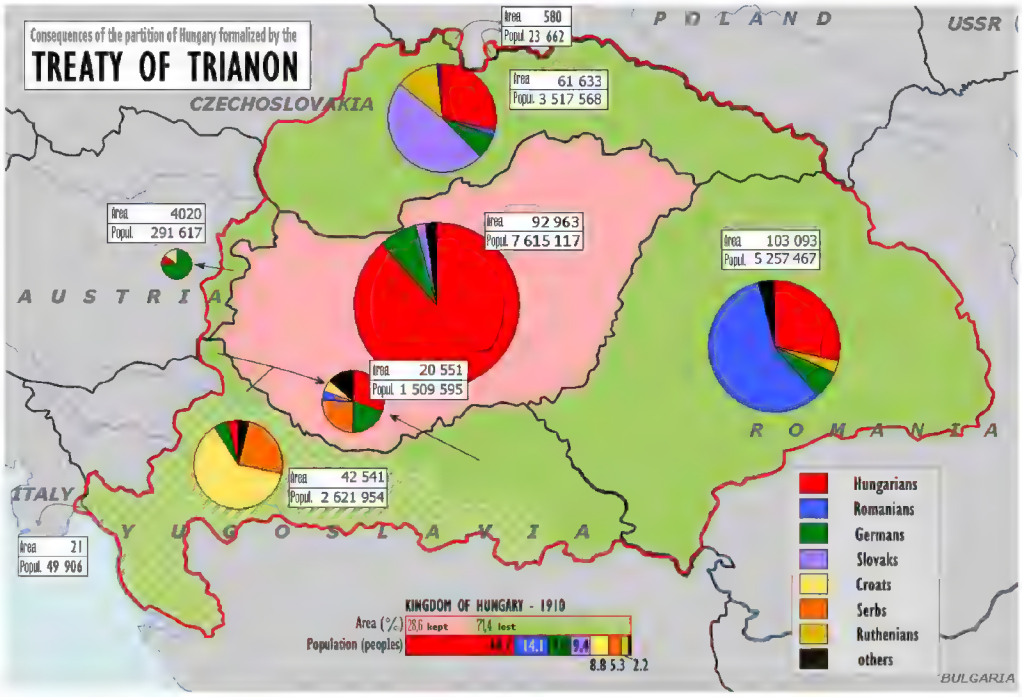

Figure 21.
The red outline is the former Kingdom of Hungary pre-Trianon[27]

©Consequences of the Treaty of Trianon. Adapted from Wikimedia Commons, by CoolKoon, based on an original by Fz22. Licensed under CC BY-SA 3.0.

Economically, 61 percent of arable land, 84 percent of timber, 62 percent of railroads, 64 percent of hard surface roads, 83 percent of pig iron output, 55 percent of industrial plants and 67 percent of credit and banking institutions of the former Kingdom of Hungary now lay within the territory of Hungary's neighbors. Romania, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia had to assume part of the financial obligations of the former Kingdom of Hungary on account of the parts of its territory under their sovereignty. Fortunately, the Groedel timber business had most, if not all, of its timber-rich properties and business activities located outside of Hungary's newly redrawn borders. As a result, this change did not have a significant long-term impact on their operations.

Magyarság, December 28, 1920

[the following details the effect of the war within Transylvania (then part of Romania due to the Treaty) and Hungary.]

*The economic situation in Transylvania is extremely tense. The ill-intentioned exchange of money and the related panamas [*swindles*] not only caused enormous damage to Hungarians (for which they were primarily intended), but also threatened the entire economic life of Romania with a crisis. Lack of money destroys the whole trade. The trade of the separated Hungarian cities[28] is on the verge of bankruptcy, and property value is dropping. The real estate trade has, so to speak, completely ceased. Houses and land, for which a fortune was paid a few months ago, cannot be sold. Only the prices of "necessary goods" are becoming more expensive, to the extent that the Hungarian market can be said to be cheap. The latest sign of economic bankruptcy is that the Transylvanian industrial companies are shutting down their operations. Last week, wood production ceased at Baron Groedel's Máramaros lumberyards. Many thousands of workers were laid off because the company managers stopped payments due to a lack of funds.*

Military considerations diverted the Treaty from the Wilson principles, making economic cooperation within the Carpathian Basin more difficult. The borders bisected transport links—in the Kingdom of Hungary the road and railway

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[27]*By derivative work: CoolKoon (talk)Hungary 1910-1920.png: The original uploader was Fz22 at English Wikipedia. (Original text: fz22 (talk)) - Hungary 1910-1920.png. CC BY-SA 3.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=5727899*

[28]*Separated due to localities having been relocated to various countries based on the Treaty.*

network had a radial structure, with Budapest in the center. Many roads and railways running along the new borders and interlinking radial transport lines lay within the territory of Hungary's neighbors.

The military conditions were similar to those imposed on Germany by the Treaty of Versailles; the Hungarian army was to be restricted to 35,000 men and there was to be no conscription. Further provisions stated that in Hungary, no railway would be built with more than one track.

Hungary also renounced all privileges in territories outside Europe that belonged to the former Austro-Hungarian monarchy.[29]

Despite these challenges, most successor countries honored previous agreements and land ownership, allowing the company to maintain its assets. Interestingly, Hermann's timber business continued to thrive despite the war's impact on the company's infrastructure, such as the destruction of many sawmills, and he continued navigating in the new world order.

The Treaty required successor countries to honor existing commercial agreements, which was advantageous for the business and the family. Hungary was required to provide raw and finished timber products to the Allied and associated governments as partial restitution for five years after the Treaty's ratification, at the same price paid by Hungarian nationals and subject to any discounts given to similar products for Hungarian nationals. Separately, another concession required Hungary to provide reconstruction materials to repair damage caused by the war. The League of Nations Reparation Committee monitored these demands. As a result of the Treaty, the Groedel Brothers business continued exporting goods, and due to the infrastructure damage in the successor countries (Romania, Poland, and the Slavic countries), the amount shipped was much greater than before the war. The war profited the Groedels greatly.

For several months during 1919, the Romanian army occupied Budapest and overthrew the brief communist rule led by Bela Kun that was having a near-fatal impact on members of Hermann's extended family[30]. The Romanian army later retreated to within the new Romania borders, after which Hermann convinced the Hungarian government to lend him funds to rebuild the sawmills and business headquar-

[29] *https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Treaty_of_Trianon*

[30] *See the chapter on Laszlo Vecsey*

ters in Skole that were burned and looted by the Russians during the war. Groedel's timber business was crucial for rebuilding Hungary's infrastructure and war reparations. However, there was a significant price to pay for profiting during the war.

Körösvidék, November 10, 1920

***Sixty million tax**. The VI district tax inspectorate launched an investigation to determine the war profits of Barons Bernát Groedel and Ármin. Based on the results of the investigation, Baron Ármin Groedel was charged 49,837,000 crowns in war profit tax. The tax inspectorate ordered execution to ensure the profit tax of 59,644,000 kroner, and thus the villa of Baron Ármin Groedel in Lendvay Street and the house of Baron Bernát Groedel at 96 Aréna Street were seized. In addition, the tax office obtained a lien on the Groedel's houses in Angelföld, Mrs. Bernát Groedel's 2,000-hold estate in Kaba and blocked their current account claims in Budapest banks. We note that the nearly 60 million tax applies to only one type of tax, and the Groedels' property and income taxes have yet to be determined.*

Körösvidék, November 10, 1920

It is strange that an investigation has to be conducted to determine how much war profit a family of non-Hungarian race made. We read that the tax inspectorate of the VI district of Budapest imposed 59,644,000 kroner in war profits on Mr. Bernát Groedel and Baron Ármin after investigating how much war profit the two gentlemen had attained. It is interesting that they should be investigating Mr. Groedel, because they do not consider it necessary, they do not feel obliged to give to the state what belongs to the state. But all Groedels demand that the state takes good care of their property and physical health, and they shout for consolidated relations even when not a hair is bent when they already have millions, of which they do not want to hand over the state's share. It's about time that tax evasion and concealment of tax base were punished with confiscation of assets and prison terms. Then maybe the non-Hungarian type either pays the public tax - or emigrates.

The following article details the impact of the war and, in particular, the Treaty's consequences.

The end of the First World War had a significant negative impact on the Romanian economy due in part to the lack of funds to repair the railways, where Hermann had significant assets. For the wood industry, the lack of transportation threatened to close down the plants completely.

Keleti Ujság, July 6, 1921

"ECONOMY: The gathered wood producers ... desperately discussed the situation, which has become almost fatal due to transportation difficulties, threatening to close down all their plants and plunging Transylvania's largest and most influential industrial and commercial organizations — together with employers and workers — into an inevitable crisis. Some of Groedel's plants are already on hold, and in others, the inability to deliver has resulted in plant reductions and wage cuts, while billions worth of harvested wood is lying in the warehouses." Many lumber plants retained their skilled workers, but many thousands became unemployed.

During the same period when the Romanian economy was experiencing its crisis, the Hungarian media was reporting on the outflow of wealth to other nations, causing an increased financial strain on less privileged Hungarians who were left to finance infrastructure rebuilding and cope with higher interest rates and inflation. The Groedels were identified as one of the primary examples of "wealth flight." Before the war, Hermann instinctively transferred the family and business assets into two Swiss trusts, shielding them from inflation and the negative effects of war.

Reggeli Ujság July 6, 1921

If the heavens have already fallen on us in a piece of blackness, if we have to pay and sweat out the mess, it would be fair and reassuring if everyone paid according to his ability or if the war fortune gave incomparably more than the bitterly scraped earnings. In this respect, however, there have been unheard-of omissions. As recently as last year, under previous governments, many, many war fortunes, many ill-gotten treasures smelled the saffron and fled the country before the financial authorities could get their hands on them. Billions escaped from reckoning in this way. Now, in the Finance Committee of the National Assembly, Count János Hadik is exposing the large-scale smuggling of wealth that has been going on here recently. But even before Count Hadik, the "Magyar Hírlap" repeatedly mentioned the stolen assets, and at a time when something could have been done about this villainy. We cannot find a milder word," wrote the "Magyar Hírlap", "for the actions of those big capitalists, big businessmen and joint-stock companies that stole billions of dollars abroad, crippling all those who remained here with their wealth, because their escape means increased burdens for those whose souls did not lead them to such dishonest actions. To point out only the biggest cases again,

the Magyar Hírlap has repeatedly dealt with the Groedel barons' flight of assets, the unprecedented transaction of Foresta[31]*, the bravura foreign 'foundations' of Castiglione and others, all of which prove that culpable omissions were made here. It is imperative that the most rigorous investigation be launched into these asset flight cases and that all those who are at fault or guilty and still available be held accountable in the most ruthless manner.*

Unfortunately, there is no information on the case's outcome, but it doesn't appear that it impacted the family to any great extent. They did not lose their homes.

Something More to Deal With

On December 6, 1930. Hermann filed a complaint with the police that while the family was away, someone had stolen carpets, silver and clothes worth nearly four hundred thousand kroner from the house. According to the complaint, Katalin Kovács, a 22-year-old maid, was entrusted with the custody of the apartment, and she was held responsible. The maid was insulted and rejected all accusations of theft. However, detectives found the stolen items in Újpest at Kovács's sister's house.

The detectives found Kovács, brought her to one of the detective's rooms, and began an interrogation. During questioning, she confessed to having committed the thefts. With three people in the room hearing the confession, the interrogating detective left for a few minutes. During his absence, Kovács walked over to the open window, and when no one was paying attention, she climbed onto the window ledge and threw herself through the window to the pavement two stories below.

With a terrible scream, she was spread out on the sidewalk of Zrínyi Street, and in seconds a huge crowd gathered around the attempted suicide. Detectives and police immediately rushed down the street, but by then, Kovács was already lying unconscious. After a few minutes, the ambulances arrived, and the suicidal girl regained consciousness for a minute and confessed to the paramedic leaning over her that she wanted to escape from the punishment to death. She was transported to the Rókus hospital, where it was determined that her right leg was broken and was probably suffering from serious internal injuries.

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[31] *A Groedel company*

The End Arrives

Uj Kelet 6 December 1930

The following article, in whose grace commemorates Baron Groedel Herman, was written for the Uj Kelet by Abraham Berschkovits, director of the bent furniture factory in Maramures:

There was a short, shocking sad sadness on the telegram: Baron Groedel Hermann died.

I know many will appreciate the great merits of Baron Groedel. All that needs to be pointed out is his genius ventures, which made his name known in world relations and provided livelihoods for many tens of thousands of people. Reference can be made to the confidence that Emperor Franz Joseph had in confronting him when he described the active merchant with the title of Baron. An open book is his career, which is his heights to the highest peaks, and the great virtue is the immense energy which, at the age of 70 and a few years, did not let him rest, but encouraged him to perform more and more. But I am only going to tell you here about the relationship that Baron Groedel had with his officials and workers.

Baron Groedel's system can serve as an example to any employer. It was his principle to expect a good job only from a well-paid worker. He provided a decent retirement allowance to his officers and workers, and whenever needed, he was always on hand with advice and assistance.

It is more than five decades since Baron Groedel started his first plant in Maramures. Before that, Márarmaros was in need, and the current governments took pity on the population with a little help. Although the state produced wood to a lesser extent, there were not many blessings in this production. The wood was not sufficiently processed and thus no market could be created for it.

Baron Groedel established the president's modern sawmill in Mararmaros County. He put trained professionals at the head of the plants and at the cost of hard work, the Maramures tree managed to gain not only a market but also a brand.

In the first years of its operation, Maramures flourished, the legion of the ancient workers of its officials rose to many thousands, and in addition to the Baron's colossal plants, a whole army of smaller sawmills was established. These plants were supported in all respects by Baron Groedel.

In 1907, the wood industry went into a severe crisis. The largest company in Márarmaros was struggling with payment difficulties, the banks were very interested in the company, they were about to fail and the industry of Márarmaros was in serious danger. The leaders of the company then turned to Baron Groedel. Baron Groedel immediately resolved the issue, smiling and saying how many millions it cost. But he did it because he wanted to save the situation in Maramures.

And this incident was repeated in 1926. One of the huge companies in Márarmaros was in crisis. The existence of more than a thousand workers and officials was at stake. The timber merchants of Maramures begged the baron to rescue the company and save their bread. Baron Groedel bowed to their words - and this new resolution took a small 75 million lei for Baron Groedel Herman.

The deceased baron has great merit in the Viso public forests. For more than five decades now, proceedings have been pending in the case of public forests. All the forums of the old empire approved the division of the public order orders but the implementation took place nom. All the forums of the new empire also made a decision on this issue and contributed to the division of forests. It was already necessary to survey the forests, but for the costs required 8 million lei of this was not for anyone. Despite Baron Groedel's interest in only 20 percent of the state-owned forests, this alone covered all the costs, so that the burning problem of the people of Maramures could be resolved as soon as possible.

Unfortunately, politics decided otherwise. When the Maramures court began to implement the decision of the Supreme Court of Cassation, a telegram was received from the Minister of Justice, in which the division of forests was suspended.

Baron Groedel could not understand that in a state governed by the rule of law the decision of the Supreme Court of Cassation was not respected and that political influence would prevail here as well, so he urgently liquidated several of his Maramures plants.

Since then, the problem of poverty in Maramures has been on the agenda, which has caused so much trouble so far. Crowds have been sitting at Márarmaros's sickbed ever since and try to cover the gaping deep wound ...

But in vain...

On Thursday night, as Baron had spent his last supper, he declared to his company that he was not feeling as well anywhere as he did on Maramures. The delicate

threads of the start and the youthful start tied Baron Groedel Hermann to Maramures until his last day, until he was 75 years old.

And these feelings triumphed over the Baron's widow when she decided to move to Maramures.

Baron Hermann Groedel left a lasting memory in Maramures. The grandchildren of this people will also remember him with grace. Because he represents the prosperity and heyday of this doomed county ...

HERMANN'S LETTERS

1903–1920

In 2012, I discovered that the Leo Baeck Institute (LBI.org) in New York, located on West 16th Street, held a collection of family-related documents, including numerous letters from Baron Hermann Groedel to his first cousin, Hermann Nussbaum of Frankfurt am Main. The Nussbaum family had preserved these letters and eventually donated them to the LBI. Beyond the Nussbaum collection, the institute also houses several other letters exchanged between Hermann and various individuals, offering further insight into that period of his life.

Baron Hermann's aunt Luise (Zadik's sister), had married Meier Nussbaum, and they had several children, including a son, Hermann, who was about three years younger than Hermann Groedel. The two Hermanns (first cousins) kept in close touch over the years; we now have copies of those letters[32].

There are twenty-nine letters. They were all written in German, some handwritten and some typewritten. Using technology and judicial use of a German translation group on Facebook, Hermann's handwriting was deciphered and his letters translated.

Hermann's Personal Reflections

Hermann's letters reveal a man who balanced business, family, and legacy with meticulous care. He was a man of immense ambition, deeply entrenched in the timber industry, yet his letters reveal a more intimate and reflective side. His correspondence with family, particularly his cousin Hermann Nussbaum, shows us not only his business strategies but also his personal philosophies, concerns, and affections. These correspondences offer a deeper look at his values, relationships, and reflections on his status in society.

His letters to relatives and associates blend financial discussions with personal warmth, offering advice on marriage, expressing gratitude for honors received, and carefully managing long-standing debts. A letter from 1903, written after his ennoblement, captures his lighthearted nature as he encourages his cousin to take the "yoke of marriage." In contrast, a 1905 letter demonstrates his pre-

[32] *https://archives.cjh.org/repositories/5/top_containers/85967.*

cise approach to financial matters, ensuring that even a decades-old debt was handled with care and efficiency.

Beyond business, Hermann took great pride in Skole, seeing it not just as an estate but as a symbol of family legacy. His 1914 letter to an Austrian envoy speaks of the deep honor he felt in hosting aristocratic hunts—a reflection of how much his social standing mattered to him.

"...I would consider the honor of personally delivering to His Royal Highness an invitation to hunt in Skole as the crown of my honors experienced in life."

Yet, amidst his success, his letters also hint at an underlying struggle with identity. One passage stands out: ***"I will stand by the Jewish community as long as I will live."*** Though he later converted to Christianity, these words suggest an ongoing tension between personal belief and societal expectation.

The letters that follow provide a rare glimpse into Hermann's private world. They reveal not just a businessman and nobleman, but a thoughtful, ambitious, and deeply engaged family leader, navigating in an era of profound change.

The letters begin on April 7, 1903, around the time Hermann and his brothers received their ennoblement (von Gyluafalva), and two years before being honored with the title of Baron.

The Appendix contains an inventory of the letters, including a brief summation of their contents.

April 7, 1903

[Handwritten on company letterhead to Hermann Nussbaum:]

Siebenburgische Waldindustrie Actien Gesellschaft
[Transylvania Forest Industry Stock Company]

Budapest: April 7, 1903

The Transylvanian Forest industry has already confirmed receipt of the instruction to Budapest yesterday, and thus our financial transaction is to be considered concluded for a year. It suits me best if you pay the interest annually, but in the interest of saving postage and all inconveniences, you will write me a postcard every year, and I will give you the amount in a cheque, provided, of course, that it suits you. In this way, you won't have to make any trips.

I am in lively correspondence with Uncle Ludwig; he still takes an interest in all our business transactions, which have significantly increased in scope since my last visit to Frankfurt due to my trip to England. We have also laid the foundation for a fleet by ordering two steamers: Melanie Groedel & Margit Groedel, with a capacity of 9,000 tons each, for the price of 1,300,000 M.

The first ship, Melanie Groedel, will set sail in mid-May. Since we placed the order, there has been a favorable situation in shipbuilding, and today we could sell the two ships at a profit of 80,000 marks without having seen them or knowing that they are ready.

As a result of my experiences in England, I have also added a new and quite significant business to our former timber business by making use of an option granted to us on June 30, 1901, to acquire a new, large business in Romania, the land of the future. The business has been somewhat neglected due to lack of funds since then, and it is now showing signs of a bright future. It is particularly advantageous for us that Romania itself has considerable demand this year, and we are not obliged to export this production overseas. Prices in Romania have risen by 10–12% over the past three months, and there is every prospect that the business, which has languished for four years, will improve again. Our competition in Romania has closed its entire production for this year to foreign markets, so in case of increased demand, we will have a fairly good position, especially since we have sold almost nothing from the newly acquired business in Romania.

Enough about business matters. I now return to your message regarding your possible engagement. As much as I would love to welcome you here as my guest, I am still too good a friend and cousin to not wish to see you soon as a happy bridegroom. I firmly believe that this time you will approach the matter more sensibly, and your chosen one will not have a taste for Lindt chocolate like your previous wife. Choose a simple girl from a bourgeois family, and you will likely have made a good choice. I sincerely wish you all the best and send my greetings to you, your dear sisters, and brothers-in-law, and remain, as always, yours.

sincere cousin - Hermann Groedel

July 3, 1903

[Note: The letter below was in reply to Nussbaum's postcard congratulating Hermann and his brothers on receiving nobility; "Groedel von Gyulafalva." Notably, Hermann had, within the past few months, acquired the mansion in Budapest on Lendvay ut 26. The house was eventually carved up into apartments in the post-WW2 era, and the last apartment in the mansion owned by a Groedel descendant was sold in 2021.]

Groedel Armin
Budapest. 3 July 1903
Lendvay utcza 26

Dear cousin!

The attention you pay to me by writing your postcard in blue ink is in any case very beautiful and I thank you most sincerely for your good wishes, also in the name of my brothers, to whom I will pass your congratulations.

Wishing you a very pleasant summer stay and giving you the advice to finally enter the yoke of marriage, I greet you as always most cordially,

Your faithful cousin

Hermann

March 22, 1905

Note: In this letter, Baron Hermann references Bathory utca, which was their Budapest HQ.

Groedel Armin
Lendvay-utcza 26

Budapest. 22/III. 1905

Dear Cousin!

Yesterday afternoon I received your card at my apartment at Lendvay u. 26. You have not given an exact address in the SWAG of your unsigned letter of the 19th. For the sake of order, I want to mention that letters to me should always be addressed to Bpest, V. Bathory utca 8.

I am glad to hear from you that your dear wife, whom I greet very much, is enjoying the best of health and that the serious operation is now a thing of the past without consequences; I am also infinitely pleased to hear from you that Emilien's[33] husband has become a professor, in my eyes he was already a professor long ago according to his great knowledge. I hope to congratulate him personally in the course of the summer.

I am in lively correspondence with Uncle[34], he is still at hand and reading his letters is a real pleasure.

I take note of your notice that you intend to repay the debt of Fl.3000 South German currency that has existed for several decades, and I ask you to send me a check at Budapest to the address of SWAG, after receipt of which I will immediately send you the receipt in my possession. I enclose a copy of the promissory bill.

In giving you my warmest greetings for today and asking you to occasionally also give my best regards to your sister, I am, as always, your

faithful cousin,
[Signed] Hermann

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[33]*Emilien "Emilie" is Hermann Nussbaum's younger sister*

[34]*"Uncle" is Ludwig (Löb) Groedel, Hermann's father's (Zadig) older brother.*

September 14, 1905

Note: This is the letter that Hermann received as notification that he and his brothers have risen to the level of Baron, with the addition of "de Bogdán" in the title.

September 14, 1905

3990/M.E.I.

Highborn Baron!

His Imperial & Royal Hungarian Apostolic Majesty has with the highest decision on 11. September, conferred on you and your brothers, Bernhard Groedel de Gyulafalva and Dr. Albert Groedel de Gyulafalva and their legal descendants, in recognition of their services rendered in the field of industry and charity, the Hungarian baronial dignity maintaining the predicate "de Gyulafalva" and adding the predicate "de Bogdán."

In bringing this latest decision to the attention of Your Majesty, I request that you also bring it to the attention of your aforementioned brothers.

Concerning the issuance of the actual award letter, I would like to inform Your Highness that you should directly contact the Directorate of the Auxiliary Office of the Hungarian Royal Ministry.

Budapest, September 14, 1905.

Br. Geza Fejerváry

Sr. Highborn to the Baron

Hermann Groedel de gyulafalva and bogdán

Director of the Transylvanian Forest Industry Joint Stock Company

Budapest.

September 20, 1905

[Pg1]

Máramarossziget, 20, September, 1905

Dear cousin!

Because of hand pain & lack of a typewriter I was only today able to answer your dear lines from R. but briefly the writing will exhaust me.

Content has pleased me very much have you had success? I am here since 4 July & am now terribly congratulated, today alone 4 deputations. Baron is a very beautiful thing and hereditary, uncle writes this appointment is a high honor for the entire family.

[Pg2]

Rich everything is not everything. Now we & our children are all dignified (from birth in future) great word.

I close for today with warm greetings to your dear wife and you, dear Hermann.

(baron von Groedel de Gyulafalva & Bogdan) This is me

September 23, 1905

Author's Note: This is a four-page letter. I have not been able to transcribe nor translate every word, nor is the translation perfect, and in some cases, it is confusing. However, I have attempted to refine some of the sentences to make them more understandable.

M. Sziget, 23 September 1905

Dear Hermann!
Hungary now has 5 Jewish barons.

Numbers	Family or Brothers	Name	Ennobled (Years Ago)	Year Ennobled	Baronial Title (Years Later)	Baronial Year
1	Family	Popper	48	1870	25	1895
1	Family	Schossberger	46	1886	22	1908
4	Brothers	Guttmann	35	1904	31	1935
1	Family	Herzog	20	1905	19	1924
3	Brothers	Us	2	1903	2	1905

Everything is hereditary. We got a new second coat of arms with the inscription: "Labor Bonae Famae Gloriaeque Pater est." Labor is the source of fame & good reputation. The baronial emblem has a 7-pointed crown. High nobility. The award has caused a huge sensation among both Jews & Christians–I have received about 500 congratulations.

Baron sounds very good; I have gotten used to it much faster than expected. My daughters quite enjoy being Baronesses. I, however, remain the same person I always was. Uncle [Ludwig Groedel -jz] writes that this honor is a distinction for the entire family, and he is right - it is not a small thing. Twenty years ago, before we received the nobility title, the idea of a barony seemed far off. Jews are bursting with pride, Christians here as well. Máramaros has only 1 baron, a Jew, for 300,000 inhabitants.

I would be satisfied with our business if not for the fact that one of our steam engines burned down in June. However, shipping is doing very well, and without our four steamers, we could not manage our business. In February, we acquired a very significant and favorable business deal in Romania, securing it for 20 years.[35]

Schmidt has left the company, but his departure had no effect whatsoever. He must find it painful to see how socially high we have risen—it

[35]*There were two other ships that the business acquired or leased, named Indificienter and Puccini.*

is doubly difficult for a Jew. Our baronial title is more distinguished than the Rothschilds because we have two predicates[36] R.[37] 1817 ennobled 1822. The Rothchild's barons are a little older than ours. I am enclosing some cards hastily made. Two coat of arms crosses will be added later. The local Sephardic congregation have congratulated me as their honorary corporate president (with 8 board members) & I have said in a speech that I will continue to stand by the Jewish community as long as I live.

Now I have achieved more than I ever wished or dreamed of in my life. Twenty years ago, we had only just begun to truly earn, and if someone had told me then that I would be ennobled in 30 years, I would have been overjoyed. Now I am a Méltóságos[38]. I am seated in front of a major-general at official functions. We have established a baronial dynasty, myself, my 5 sons, my 2 brothers, and Albert's 2 sons, 10 barons in total."

I share all of this with you because I know that it will bring you joy. I am about to leave for Budapest, where I am urgently needed, I have been on a summer holiday since 4 July. I am now alone on the property.

The estate has 40 rooms with 19 servants with 5 governesses (1 French, 1 English, 3 German) 8 maids, 3 footmen, 4 coachmen, & all are staying here with 28 unoccupied beds, everything in the fields before me seen doubly beautiful. In November I will go to Friedberg & visit you in Frankfurt. My 2nd son[39] is in Hamburg since 4 July, and is now following his course there, and goes to Geneva in January. He will remain in Hamburg for five more years, but the dialect there is not pleasant. Before the age of 22, the boys will not come into the business, so until then they must learn (languages).[40]

My hand has had enough already.[41]
Best regards to you and your dear wife from

[Signature] Hermann
P.S. Reminds me of my younger days[42]

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[36]*Meaning von Gyulafalva und Bogdan*

[37]*Rothschild*

[38]*His Excellency*

[39] *Arthur*

[40]*At this time, Lajos was the eldest at 19 years old*

[41] *Several days ago, in a previous letter to HN, HG noted that his hand was in pain*

[42]*This is a reference to the young female servants in the house while he was alone. Hermann was 49 years old at the time.*

October 5, 1905

Dear Hermann!

It is always a good sign when merchants are too busy to promptly handle private correspondence; it proves that they are very occupied with their business, which is not the case for me. Nevertheless, I work from early morning until late at night. Tomorrow there is a big negotiation here regarding the purchase of a forest. Everyone must come here to my summer residence. The town of 19,000 inhabitants, whose honorary citizen I was allowed to become today, a rare high honor. There have been 6 ministers here, as long as they were active. I am being called to a meeting, I must hurry. Once again, many thanks.

Your faithful cousin,

Hermann

October 5, 1905

Note: This letter was written to an unnamed female cousin as a reply to her letter.

Written on the letterhead of:
Transylvania Forest Industry Society
Board of Directors: Budapest

Maramarossziget – 5 Oct 1905

Dear Esteemed cousin!

Thank you very much for the kind lines, which make me very happy - it will be a special pleasure for me if the dear cousin (pardon me for taking this liberty as an older cousin) will give me the opportunity to meet your mother, such a smart, educated lady.

If nothing comes in between, I intend to visit my old home in the course of the year. Then I will certainly meet with you.

Until then, best regards to you and also to your dear mother, even if we have never met. Your devoted cousin
Hermann Groedel.

December 21, 1905

Dear Hilda!

I am in possession of your dear letter and I thank you most sincerely for sending the receipt.

According to your request, I will transfer the money to the Frankfurter Bank on the account of Ludwig and Hilda Goldschmidt, Offenback a.M. I am also informing you that the inheritance tax will probably be less than 8%, I think it will only amount to 6%. I will reimburse you for the difference immediately upon receipt of the relevant court decision.

I am very happy that you can send me reassuring advice on the health of your dear husband and that there is hope that you can go back to Offenback with him at the end of the year.

I am very happy to hear that Hermann was so happy with the plum shipment.

In the hope that your husband will soon regain his full potential, I also send greetings from my wife.

Your dear cousin

[unsigned]

December 23, 1907

Note: This is a letter to an unnamed cousin, but most likely Hermann Nussbaum.

Baron HERMANN GROEDEL v. Gulafalva Budapest den 23. December 1907

V. Bathory-utcza 8.

I thank you very much for your expressed good wishes on the occasion of the purchase of Skole by me and I gladly inform you that on the occasion of this purchase I have made the perception that the Schmidt family, in gratitude to the Blessed One, has accommodated us in every direction. We have acquired the estate at a convenient price - and what is the main thing - under extremely favorable terms of payment, so that this purchase does not cause us any worries as far as finances are concerned, because the whole sum - about 4 1/2 million - is to be paid successively in twelve annual installments - in the beginning more, later less.

And only a part of the debt will be calculated on the acquired third that belonged to the Schmidt heirs so far, so that our 2/3 are and remain as before, completely free of debts, which can be regarded in the eyes of the world as a sign of the highest prosperity, because at present in our country, also in Austria, and our finest customers, who have been paying cash, are now sending me good remittances for escompte [discounts], since they are encountering difficulties in issuing their remittances on the part of the banks - which one can quite calmly call robbers - and, apart from the high escompte [discount] rates, they are unable to do so. We had fixed our interest rate on a loan until the end of 1909, and during my last stay in Vienna, I have already extended it - two years before the expiration - at the direct request of Anglo [Anglobank] until the end of 1912, under very favorable conditions. I hardly believe that there is another company in the country that enjoys credit with a bank. The Anglo bank has to take any amount of customer credit from us, and we have a huge acceptance credit, which is of enormous value to us in the past time and also in the future, because I am negotiating for a very large business - including real estate - and the connection fixed for years to come is extremely beneficial to me.

The prospects for the business next year are very favorable against all expectations and just today our Romanian representative sent an order for K 300,000, cash customer. In the Orient [Turkey], too, business is booming and prices are being achieved there that we have never dreamed of. If it were not for the shortage of money, there would have been another boom in lumber, but the fact that prices are still holding up is proof that the business is internally healthy, because there is already a shortage of housing everywhere, because not much has been built this year and last year.

I heard from Albert that his father-in-law, Pollack, has also done splendid business this year, Pollack himself told me that he has the largest factory in the mainland, these people have also come a long way, and are also extremely efficient.

During my last stay in Vienna, I sold 1/10 of our Romanian forests for 3 million to our competitors in Vienna and made a brilliant deal, because we have a huge flow of timber there and these forests will be cut only after ten years. Who would have believed that these forests would ever get this value? We have the prospect of selling 1-2 more such forests to the same company in the next few years, or even in the spring.

Skole runs like a mill wheel, completely by itself, I have nothing to do with this business, Ludwig Faatz from Friedberg is the sole lawyer there and manages the business with great prudence and understanding, he is in a brilliant position and may - when he leaves Skole after five years - have a fortune of over 500,000 Mk. A golden nail falls from a golden wheel. When Faatz came to our shop thirty years ago, he used to work for "David Groedel Sohne" in the iron shop, his uncle did not have a tenth of the assets that Faatz has today. As you know, Schmidt had left a couple of million, but unfortunately his son has no children and I am afraid that the whole fortune will go to England, where his wife is from.

Your little boy must be a great guy, in any case he has the advantage - and this is not to be praised enough - that he does not look like a Jewish child *[the implications of this statement are staggering about the antisemitism that Hermann must have experienced -jz].* Please tell your first wife, whom I greet most sincerely, that I will certainly have the pleasure of visiting her during my next visit to Frankfurt in

order to thank her personally for her first lines. I have already had the pleasure of telling you that you have really made a very good choice, for she is a seldom clever and sensible woman, who has a lot of heart, I send her my warmest friendly greetings, and by also enclosing my warmest greetings for you and your two sisters, I am, as always, your

sincere, faithful cousin
[signed] Hermann

December 27, 1910

Note: This is a letter to Field Marshal Lieutenant Baron von Giesl. Baron Wladimir Rudolf Karl Freiherr Giesl von Gieslingen (1860 – 1936) was an Austro-Hungarian general and diplomat during World War I, most famous for delivering the ultimatum to the Serbian government during the July Crisis of 1914 that began The Great War.

Budapest, 27 December 1910

Your excellency,

I sincerely thank you for your kind wishes on the occasion of the holidays, both from my wife and myself, and add my best wishes for the approaching New Year.

I know that Your Excellency is very interested in the results of our trip to America and I can only tell you that I found the people in every direction as gigantic as God created the country. In terms of ingenuity, but also in terms of economic size, the people are far superior to us; one really has to get up early in the morning in order not to be misled.

The business offered to us was in heaven and not on earth, the rights belong to someone else and we immediately made it clear to the gentlemen that we are not bullies and we renounce their further recommendation. On the basis of my sharp declarations, they immediately wanted to reimburse me for travel expenses, which I rejected with indignation.

We then made a big trip to Florida, close to the Gulf of Mexico. Last stop of the Seabord Line was Sarasota, where we visited large forests and I can say that gold is not found there. The woods are covered with Long Yellow Leaf Pine, a kind of pine, but the soil is the most suitable for orange and grapefruit plantations, which have been growing there for several years. The climate is the most beautiful you can imagine. Palm trees like the spruce in our country, but not so high, in a word, paradise at the same latitude. I have not yet made the decision to buy there and preferred to send my son Arthur with the forester Stenzel to the West, so that they can make the necessary studies there. An American multi-millionaire provided me with all the necessary means and agreed to do business with us. I, my wife, my daughter and my son are attracted to America and I believe that in a short time we will make large purchases in the West, where we have already made the nec-

essary preliminary studies, have the option for years in hand and the result will not fail to materialize. America has, what is a particular disadvantage for large undertakings, a shortage of men, and Europe must and will suffer severely from this in the next decades, since the able-bodied men in America are paid at least as well as the Bemats in the VII & VIII rank class here. Furthermore, the people have their labor unions and formally terrorize the employers, so that a continuous struggle rages between workers and employers. During our presence there were several strikes, so that we had to walk to the ship during our departure, and a large part of my wife's laundry was not delivered for ten days, because the delivery of the mail is done by an express company, which now wants to be nationalized.

His Royal Highness Prince August of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha honored me in Vienna with a long visit at the Hotel Bristol and on this occasion made me the pleasant announcement that His Imperial Highness Archduke Franz Salvator will also come to Skole for the hunt in the future year and asked me to invite him to the Jags at the beginning of September in an appropriate form, which wish I will fulfill with pleasure. I am looking forward to welcoming Your Excellency again next year for the hunt and have agreed with His Royal Highness Prince Coburg that this year we will determine the time when the high lords and ladies will come to the hunt, because, as I take the liberty of remarking, the deer hunts do not judge themselves according to the high hunting guests, in that they only allow the short time of their highest pleasure for shooting.

Finally, I would like to make use of your kind permission to make a request to you, in that I kindly ask Your Excellency to warmly recommend my son Richard, who will serve his one-year voluntary year next October, to the colonel of a first dragoon or hussar regiment, and to inform me after the colonel's reply which regiment my son will choose. Your Excellency receives my best thanks in advance.

In conveying my best regards to Your Excellency and my family, I am your most esteemed friend.

December 29, 1910

Hermann Groedel Budapest 29 December 1910

V. Báthory-utcza 8.

Greetings Hermann!

I received your kind lines of the 22nd, and have taken good note of the contents. Your boy must be a splendid fellow, he has been incorporated into my album, he looks very much like you.

The world is a big city. When we arrived in New York, the local newspapers, the New Herald[43], published great articles about our trip, and also in a distinguished weekly paper, our trip was discussed in the most beautiful way. By chance we met a gentleman on the trip who introduced us to the very finest Christian society. Enclosed I am sending you a copy of my letter addressed to the Field Marshal Lieutenant, Baron von Giesl, from which you will pretty much see the details of my trip. My son Arthur is still over there with a forester, we had news from Vancouver and Seattle, he will be home at the end of January. Theodor Grödel I have visited in New-Wark[44], met his wife and daughter, he owns a rather large en gros business, also enjoys quite a reputation, I was with him in a large department store and saw how the boss treated him in the most elegant way. I personally visited Humboldt Schulhof[45] in his store, my wife, my daughter and my son did not want to visit him there, he is doing very well, he is supposed to be a very rich man, America is a thankfully fine outlet for fur, the lexus that the women there drive is enormous, the men are the purest draught animals and work, so to speak, only for the welfare of the women, who also completely lead the regiment and in the most ruthless manner. - A 50-fold millionaire has given my son Arthur the very warmest recommendations to the West and has also given us X million dollars for our enterprise. I believe that in a few years we will be making bigger deals there, it is a tremendously large country, there is still a lot to be made there, with or without a trust. We also, as you must have read, made a timber cartel from January 1, so the prices were increased by cca 15%. After I purchased my raw wood already years ago, this comes me very much to favor.

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[43] *New York Herald*

[44] *Newark NJ*

[45] *Humbolt was Hermann's cousin, son of his aunt Fanny Groedel Schulhof*

Enclosed is a copy of a picture postcard sent to me by Prince August of Saxony Coburg Gotha on the occasion of the holidays, the same came to Skole in the Autumn for hunting.

Bernhard Groedel visited me here and I had a big fight with Hermann Hirschhorn because of him, H.Hirschhorn made a big mistake and scolded our goods in his presence in an unqualified way, a case that has never happened before, I told Hermann H. my opinion and the customer in question will never get wood from us again.

If you see Bing, I send him my regards, he was a good acquaintance of Papa, he is an uncle of Theodor Groedel. - A nephew of mine, Dr. Jur. Julius Ulrich, who took his state exams in Germany and on my advice wants to devote himself to banking, has been employed as a secretary at SWAG for a few days and will go to Galatz at the beginning of April to study shipping, he intends to join the Anglo-Austrian Bank as a secretary later on to begin his career there. Through my intimate connections with the Anglo-Bank, I can easily help him, as you can imagine, he will certainly make a career. Will be the biggest clients of the bank, which by the way has skyrocketed lately, I think the paper is a first class and believe if you have excess money, you could buy from these shares, since the paper at today's rate carries 5.4% dividend, under discretion I can tell you from fairly reliable source that this year they will pay 18 K dividend. I myself have 5000 pcs. which cost me 315 K on average. Unfortunately, I could not get a larger package at once because I bought a part under the hand 8 days ago.

How is your business? I am halfway satisfied on the whole and on the whole, now with the cartel things should get better, so I will be satisfied.

Sending you, your dear wife and sisters my best wishes for the coming New Year, I am with warm greetings.

July 29, 1911

Skole [this is a multi-page letter with at least two missing pages]

Dear Hermann!

I acknowledge receiving your kind words. I am pleased to hear that you and yours are doing well. I have the pleasure of assuring you of the same. I have taken a long trip to Aussig, Dresden and Berlin. In our honour, Mr. von Niruptsch, Country & Prince Economics Minister Baron von Schorleinen Olst, invited us. We then drove to Leipzig, then my wife and daughter drove to Paris on June 22nd, then Lucerne, where we were in St. Moritz for two days. I was allowed to travel on business and was very successful with the Deutsche Bank, who were prepared to do a big deal with me for RM 5,000,000. The autumn will end with His Imperial and Royal Highness Archduke Leopold Salvator being a guest at the hunt this year, as will His King Robert, Prince Augustus of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha. Business is going brilliantly this year, a veritable boom in timber. The total increase in profits compared to 1910, without additional costs, is R 1,250,000.

We are about to sell R 10,000,000 of timber, but unfortunately, we gave up the option too early until October 10th, and General Creditbank has advanced me in the company... the president of the Anglobank, Carl Morawitz [Karl Ritter von Morawitz].

[Missing pages...]

For a period of 9 years. I am convinced that he would gladly redeem my 45% today and at double the amount, meaning he would give me a profit of RM 1,500,000 to get rid of me. But I have no desire to give up this business at this price, which obliges the President to advance up to Europe 1920 up to RM 3,800,000 in case of need. Next year, we are going to build railways for ourselves with 1 million, to make better use of the thinnings. For the time being, in the next 20 years, we will have minimal clear-cuttings, approximately 1500 spruce and beech trees each. The property will yield at most 3%, but then 15-20% for eternity.

So, we will have RM 250,000 per year now against normal course losses, which will amount to RM 7 million in 20 years, so the property will cost RM 15 million, and this sum will yield 10%.

I am very satisfied with the purchase, even though I foresee no benefit. On the contrary, I must certainly invest RM 30 million in 1921. They want to increase the mortgage burden to RM 5 million at the moment when the financial situation improves, which, however,

is not foreseeable at the moment, also a great disadvantage for our business, as construction activity has declined significantly. The speculation in our business was very large; our Romanian parts experienced an unprecedented boom, which prompted me to increase the capital of one of these companies from 1,800,000 Lei in 1911 to 7 million this year.

We distributed 8% in 1910 to 1% shareholders, 15% in 1911 to 7%, and we can easily distribute 1.5% per 1912 to the increased capital of ten million after appropriate depreciation, so to speak. B. we wrote off the building account, which stood at Lei 980,000, to one Lei in 1911. This year we will also be able to write off all water constructions, which still amount to ~900,00 Lei, to one Lei lightly, so that by the end of 1912, all huge analogs with the layout works will be booked with two French francs.

From three other joint-stock companies owned by me, we will create a large company at the end of the year with 20 million, of which 8 million will be priorities and 12 million shares. The latter will certainly yield 10-15%, all remaining in miserable possession. We are building a new large layout in Buzau, Romania, for which the city has provided a 40-hectare plot at a very modest rent for 50 years, for 250,000. Tomorrow, the large estate Weldzirz in Galicia, formerly owned by Baron Popper, will be auctioned publicly, with a future business value of RM 8,000,000.

In addition, I bought a plot in Budapest measuring 158,000 [] meters for RM 2,500,000, 20 annual installments with 4 4/10% interest, with good prospects, a joint-stock company with RM 100,000 in Terrenum.

As you can see, I am working with full force, and if all goes well, it doubles the pleasure. Local prices have increased by 25% over the past 2 years, and Constantinople brings further price increases for autumn, spring. Moreover, we have a cartel for all relations, with great success since January 1, 1911.

Enough for today, it's getting late.

Warm greetings to your dear wife and to you from your two dear sisters and you from your faithful cousin.
Hermann

My dear wife and daughter are expecting to arrive here these days.
It's very hot during the day, but evenings are cool.
Today, the temperature is 38°C [100F].

NOTE: The following is a four-page letter written by Hermann to his cousin, Hermann Nussbaum. It appears that the letter is fragmented as there are four pages from one letter and two from a second written on the same day. However, the second letter has the number "9" at the top of the first page, and "10" on the second – alluding to the potential that they are continuous from the earlier letter. Other pages appear to be missing.

July 21, 1912

Dear Herman!

Your messages have given me a pleasant hour, as I read that Emilie is fully recovered. I send her my heartfelt greetings; she is a rare, good person, and I am not surprised at all that children from such parents excel. They see the very best in themselves, and it fills me with considerable pride when the descendants of the Groedels possess good qualities and great abilities, even though he is often talked about, blood is thicker than water. Your mother was a true Groedel in every respect, my proud genuine father won her favorite brother, indeed the favorite of all sisters, and also the dearest of brothers. Now that I am moving around in the big world of high finance, I see how extraordinarily talented our Uncle Ludwig was. The man had the ability to be the director of a large bank; he may have been wrong so many times, but I am proud of this, my teacher; he in small things, I in big ones. Just recently, I achieved one of my greatest financial successes, as the Bahner Trading Company provided me with a very considerable bank credit. You and I still work with other people's money; that has been my job for 20 years. If they had realized this earlier, we would have taken an entirely different path and opted for an exit. Wealth is a tremendous power, and I am proud that such a distinguished German bank grants us such serious trust. We are currently negotiating very seriously to acquire three adjacent properties in the vicinity of 13,000 hectares, costing approximately R6 million, mostly beech wood for future timber needs. Immediate funds required. The rest successively when times improve, we will obtain cheap mortgages from the Galician H. Bank. I insist that the remaining debt be in second place; they will readily agree, as I am well-reputed in Galicia, a man of great word.

> The purchase of the 32,000-hectare estate, which we raised on May 30th at a public auction, despite the great efforts of Prince Lubomurski, was confirmed on September 15th, 1911. We acquired it for 8 million from Hypothek, with 3 million being payable in installments over 9 years at 4% interest. Reit was paid, and on my part, I contributed 45%, which amounts to 1.5 million, as agreed upon in the contract with my partner (the President of Anglobank, it is a company in. 6. H. Kober, contractually bound that ... nothing can be done without 75% approval).

The following is the second 2-page letter written by Hermann Groedel to his cousin, Hermann Nussbaum in Frankfurt on July 21, 1912. At the top left of the first page is the number "9" as depicted below. At the top of the second page is the number "10." Due to having the same date as the previous letter, it appears that these are continuing pages, but several pages appear to be missing.

Direktor

DER Baron Groedel'schen

Herrschaft Skole

9/ P.U.T.St. Demnia-Wyzna 21 July 1912

BAHN ST SKOLE

As you can see, we are working on a large scale now, and by buying 3 estates we have to build a 48-kilometer-long narrow-gauge railroad. I already have help from my son Arthur. Before I know it my oldest daughter Paula 19 years old will marry, she is as good as engaged to a young comrade 25 years old from a very distinguished family whose name is Lonyay of Nagy-Lonyay and Basaros-Nameny, the father is also very much in favor of the marriage, he is Chief Imperial and Royal Chamberlain, a cousin of Count [Elemer] Lonyay. A Budapest newspaper wrote that the Habsburgs will get a kinship with Groedel, and it will be fine with me. My future son-in-law at the county (government assessor) will be elected as a deputy by [Count] Tisza, who is on friendly terms with the family. This is the beginning of every political career in Hungary. So you were satisfied with the answer of the Frankfurter Zeitung [newspaper], which has apologized to us in writing. The Swiss companies have the purpose of the family asset management, they suit us very well.

But now I should finally close otherwise I could bore you. Best regards to your two sisters, your dear wife, and to you from your

faithful cousin

Hermann

Treat the contents discreetly

July 30, 1912

Hotel ,,Zum Schwarzen Adler" Cznerowitz, den 30 Juli 1912

Czernowitz

Ignatz Mayer's Nachfolger

S. ADLER

[top center] Could not find better paper.

Dear Hermann!

Yesterday before my departure I received your kind lines, which gave me special pleasure, because it comes from an authoritative recognition, of which I can be justly proud.

I am here because of the purchase of a forest property. 3 1/2 million crowns (krone), leaving today. 1:20 directly Budapest exactly 24 hours driving, intense heat, but I have to travel because I have to decide. Before Budapest I drive Thursday to Arad, also a property of 33,000 yokes* or 1600 [square] fathoms** large size, great future costs, 11 million to have everything in the long run***.

Good Greetings

Hermann

*Joche/Yoke = 1.422 acres, .5755 hectares

** 1 fathom = 6 feet

*** To be paid over time.

[Note: This letter is from Baron Giesl to Hermann]

Copy. Prag, November 16, 1913

Dear Baron!
Upon my return from the splendidly conducted hunting expedition near Prague on Friday, I found your kind lines from Budapest dated the 12th.

While I telegraphed my most sincere thanks to the esteemed huntsman briefly on the 12th, I wish to express my gratitude again today with a brief description and report that the impressions will remain unforgettable for my life.

On the 10th of November, I arrived in Tuchla, warmly welcomed by Messrs. Stenzel and Vodicka, and taken to the latter's comfortable forest house, where his amiable wife, a daughter of an officer, kindly greeted me.

After a very good breakfast, we left at 1:30 for Libochora [Lybokora -jz], where we were greeted by the forestry personnel, walked a short distance and set up on a high stand in front of the decoy. This was very comfortably furnished with hay, and we had foot sacks, furs, tea, meat, etc., with us and waited for things to happen. Unfortunately, we soon had to state that the wind was bad and Vodicka soon suspected that Master bear would not come, which was also so. The moon rose around 6 o'clock, illuminated the grandiose Carpathian landscape and the time passed very quickly until 12:30 at night. At this time we pulled back, drove to forester Welzer, slept very well until 6 o'clock and drove back to Tuchla.

Vodicka had the terrain scouted and in the morning he received the message that the bear did not come to the decoy even after midnight, that it had been moved to the next trench and that the wind was unfavorable, just as it had been the day before.

Therefore, Vodicka immediately arranged the hunt on the 2nd day, and already prepared the decoy place. Tuesday 11, dm, was a splendid day, blue sky, sun colder than the day before.

At 12:30 we set off from Tuchla, and reached the location of the decoy by wagon, foot and horse at 3:45 h and waited again. The forester said that the bear could come between 5 and 6 o'clock.

By 4 o'clock it was quite dark, the moon had risen, but still so low that it did not illuminate the landscape.

A little before 5:45, Vodicka noticed a dark mass moving forward in the spruce crop, I took the rifle and had the rare sight, despite the darkness, of the familiar head bear approaching, When this got the scent of decoy, he leaped on it in two bounds. We heard the crack of the crushed bones, and we saw how the bear pulled the horse with a jump still backward into the thicket. Another leap and he would have been lost to us. We could have heard the crack of the bones in the thicket and wished him good appetite, but would not have seen him. In that moment, I fired at the black silhouette despite the darkness. After the shot, there was a commotion, twice the sound of a heavy body hitting trees, then silence, and soon after, two sighs.

Vodicka congratulated me, believing that the bear had reacted to the shot. However, we were not sure where the shot had hit, or whether the bear, if indeed hit, had settled nearby.

We stayed at the high place for another hour, the moon illuminated the landscape magnificently. The time passed in trepidation wondering if he lay there, if he was hit and if so, - how severely. At quarter of six, Vodicka called the forester and the forest warden by the rifle. They arrived at 6:45, came upon a large dark mass, confirmed the death of the dead bear and greeted me with a thunderous hunter's salute.

You can imagine how quickly we were down and the bear was lying 15 paces from the shooting point!

Thanks to the hunt, dear hunt master!

My joy was indescribable, my first bear and such a giant. The moon illuminated this enormous, shaggy mass. Farmers came, rejoiced with us, an unforgettable sight for every hunter.

The bear took the shot directly in the heart from the front. At midnight, we arrived back in Tuchla with the bear and blissfully, full of impressions, I slept until morning.

Unfortunately, it could not be photographed because no camera could be found.

The bear is brown, with very beautiful pelt and I am most sincerely grateful to you, esteemed huntsman, for this magnificent trophy.

The bear weighs 190 kilos, has a length from nost to tail of 193 cm,

and stands upright from the soles a height of 216 cm, thus around 30 cm taller than me!

Taxidermist Hodek in Vienna has already received 17 bear skins for preservation this year. Our bear, esteemed Baron, is the strongest; he estimates its age at 8-10 years.

I owe this primarily to your unlimited kindness towards me, which I deeply appreciate, as well as to the brilliant arrangements made by Vodicka and the thorough preparation for the hunt where everything was thought of and handled in a sportsmanlike manner. It's hard to believe that one can be brought to shoot a bear in the Carpathians in the wild within 32 hours; it truly requires the guidance of someone like Vodicka, who knows the wildlife and terrain intimately, and who nurtures and cares for them.

Bear hunts are so rare that poisoning these magnificent creatures would truly be a shame, as happens in some areas, where even the poison bait can be taken by foxes and martens.

I am writing in detail to Archduke and Prince August. The latter warmly and graciously congratulated me, despite not yet having bagged a bear himself. My esteemed huntsman, I have poured out my faithful hunting heart, and I sincerely thank the gracious Baroness for the hunting luck, reiterating that everything was arranged superbly, and everything went smoothly and functioned perfectly. I am sending this letter to Budapest, hoping it will be forwarded. Wishing you a safe journey and joyful hours.

A respectful hand-kiss to the Baroness, and to you, esteemed huntsman, my heartfelt thanks in old reverence, always faithfully yours.

Giesl m.p.

General d, Cavalry.

Budapest, December 6, 1913

Dear Director,

Having returned from the trip, I remember with pleasure the so pleasant time spent with you in Frankfurt and especially the joint trip to the Taunus. Although I was already familiar with this region, my memory of it has faded a little in almost four decades, so that the impression of the charming mountains had a fresh and lasting effect on me.

Taking the opportunity to assure you of this today, I have the honor, remembering your interest in hunting, to send you the copy of a letter received by the Commanding General of Prague, Baron von Giesl, which may be of interest to you, since it states that Excellency Giesl had the rare luck to kill a large bear.

Repeating my thanks for the time so kindly devoted to me, I would also like to assure you of my pleasure that you made the acquaintance of your colleague, Mr. Herzfeld. By chance it came up that the latter is a cousin of Emil Rothberg, who is closely related to my late mother, which naturally gave rise to many points of contact between us.

Will you have the kindness to convey to your brother

my most obliging greetings and accept the same from

your very devoted, Director Ludwig Hahn

Best regards

Frankfurt a/m.

[Note: This letter is actually two letters from a cousin of Hermann's and his son.]

From a cousin, Dr. Phillip Rothbarth m.p.

(This letter was probably forwarded to Hermann Nussbaum. His name is handwritten on the upper left corner of the letter.]

Frankfurt a/M 21 December 1913

Westendstr. 9.

Highly Esteemed Cousin !

Your two dear letters of 6. h 12. d.M. had truly deserved an immediate answer and how gladly I had given myself to this pleasant task, had we not been afflicted by such a heavy blow of fate. Saturday, December 6, our son-in-law gave a hall for his daughter at the English Court; he was tidy and merry during the whole evening, and conversed very well with his guests, so that he remained with the same until half past three in the morning. Arrived at home, he slept quietly until 9 o'clock in the morning, from then on he felt unwell and at 1 1/2 o'clock he was unfortunately taken away by a heart attack. Please accept my wife's and my heartfelt thanks for your affectionate, heartfelt words; your participation also had a beneficial effect on my daughter, who instructed me to thank you most sincerely.

From your friendly lines of 6.ct.I saw that you have returned safely from your trip and have pleasant memories of our meeting, also my wife and I remember very gladly the beautiful hours which we spent with you. I am very grateful to you that you came to see us, since the pleasant acquaintance with you evoked in me times long past, since as a very young person I had the pleasure of being present at the wedding celebration of your parents, and the name Groedel has not disappeared from my memory since then. What a tremendous height you have brought this name to! The saying "The land of unlimited possibilities" is indeed coined on America, but your vinous view, your energy and your untiring diligence have made it possible that this saying can be applied to your wine-branched enterprises, which are most praiseworthy in Germany and abroad.

I would like to take the liberty of making a request here, I would be

very grateful if you would send me the brochure on the development of the Groedel company.

In addition to your great-eyed creativity, I would like to take the liberty of touching on another quality that cannot be overestimated, and that is your devotion to your deceased parents; when there is such affectionate love, blessings cannot fail to reign.

My wife and I thank you most sincerely for your kind invitation to visit you; whether we will ever get to visit your beautiful Budapest, one cannot know, in any case, in the meantime you give us a good foretaste of how productive your gardens are through your rich plum consignment; the plums already look so splendid, as if they had come directly from the tree, we have already eaten a lot of them, they taste exquisite to us. We thank you very much for your kind attention.

The letters kindly sent to us by Prince Hohenlohe /your very recent acquaintance/ as well as Countess Dürkheim to your honored wife, have interested us very much, they once again throw a brilliant light on your popularity in these circles.

I hope that you will repeat your visit, which we remember with pleasure, in the not too distant future and quite often, that you are cordially welcome, we do not need to assure you.

My son Philip returns your kind greetings with heartfelt thanks, he too was very pleased to make your acquaintance, he found your conversation so interesting and attractive; a lawyer must be able to judge that.

With cordial greetings from my wife and myself and with the request to recommend us to your very honored wife, I remain your highly esteemed cousin.

faithful cousin

Emil Rothbarth m.p. Translated with www.DeepL.com/Translator (free version)

Second part of the letter was written by the son of Emil Rothbarth:

Frankfurt a/M December 21, 1913

Esteemed Baron!

My father has already remembered me in his letter, but I cannot deny myself to emphasize once again how stimulating & valuable it was for me to get to know the man who has created such an enormous enterprise from small beginnings.

While the sight of an exalted, unapproachable nature makes us feel only our smallness, the contemplation of great human achievements fills us at the same time with joyful pride. They teach us how much man is capable of. And one tries to understand how such a thing became possible.

The best, of course, must be innate, but infinitely much can be achieved by a quick will, a calm determination that keeps its goal unwaveringly in view. Modest and high at the same time with deep truth, you say that you owe the most valuable thing to your wife. If I am not mistaken, this most valuable thing is: the enthusiasm for work, the calm exertion of all forces to the highest achievements. And to this you attached serious admonitions to me, which I will take to heart.

But you were not and are not absorbed in work. I would like to add to what my father has already mentioned and to the many other things that certainly still need to be emphasized:

The great rhythm of the work, which you let resound and swell to ever more powerful chords it sounds again in your verses, in your prose! You provide proof that organizational talent and style are related things.

I am grateful to you for the encouraging, uplifting nature of your appearance, for the hymn of sown will and love that you have sung and will continue to proclaim.

Sincerely yours
Your devotedly devoted
Dr. Philipp Rothbarth m.p.

From Hermann Groedel to Count Thaddaus Bolesta-Koziebrodski in Stuttgart

Transcript. Budapest, 29 December 1913.

Your Excellency,
I would like to take the opportunity today to mention a few events that I find very gratifying, and I would like to take the opportunity to do so in consideration of the fact that they are directly connected with Your Excellency.

First of all, I have the honor to express my extraordinary joy at the news I have received from my wife that Your Excellency is once again in perfect health, which I consider a joyful moment not only in the interest of Your Excellency, but also in mine and that of my entire family, since the coming year will bring certain fulfillment to the prospect of being able to welcome Your Excellency as our honored hunting guest in Skole.

My disappointment not to have been able to address an invitation to Your Excellency this year was indeed lasting enough and only an incorrect orientation about Your Excellency's present stay abroad could determine me to refrain from it. Allow me to express to Your Excellency the pleasure with which I look forward to Your Excellency's presence.

As another moment of pleasure, I consider the occasion to express to Your Excellency my most sincere wishes for a sunny, enjoyable time to look forward to the coming one, meditations on the past awakened, so today I remember with warm gratitude the stimulating pleasure I received in the company of Your Excellency. I also remember the conversation I had with Your Excellency, in the course of which I was able to show the value I attach to letting His Royal Highness, the Grand Duke of Hesse, my most gracious sovereign, know how infinitely large a part of the successes of my life I attribute to my origins in Hesse, to the rectitude of its citizens and to the tenacity trained in German purposefulness.

I express this once again today, because the strong sense of home and the gratitude for the weapons given to me by descent in the struggle for life form an immovable part of my inner life.

I would like to assure Your Excellency that I have the honor to be in your presence with the utmost respect,

Your Excellency
very devoted
Hermann Groedel m.p.

Sr. Excellency to the Real Secret Council
Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister. Envoy and Plenipotentiary Minister
Count Thaddeus Bolesta-Koziebrodski
Stuttgart

Copy K.u.K. Austrian Hungary, embassy
Stuttgart, 4.1.1914

Dear Baron!

I thank you most sincerely for your so amiable letter and so benevolent New Year wishes, as well as the gracious invitation to this year's deer hunt. I spent my last year's vacation from August to mid-November at my home in Galicia and devoted myself to the care of my health as far as the sorrow and worries caused by the financial depression, which supplemented a three-year crop failure. It did not turn out as good as it would have been under other circumstances, but I feel stronger and healthier than before, praise God.

The day before yesterday, on the occasion of a large dinner at H.K.H. the Grand Duke of Hesse in Darmstadt, I had the welcome occasion to express the feelings you have communicated to me and to talk about you and to speak about you with H.K.H. The Grand Duke listened to me with satisfaction and interest and said that he would be pleased to make your acquaintance and would be glad to receive you in audience if you ever wanted to see your homeland again. If your plans will allow you to do so, I will be glad to make sure that His Highness will be able to receive you at that time - since he is eagerly fulfilling many and various duties and often travels.

I hereby ask you, dear Baron, for yourself and the Baroness, as well as your children, to accept my best wishes for the New Year, I remain with best regards,
Your very devoted
Count Koziebrodski m.p.

[Note: This letter is from Hermann to Count Kozibrodski]

Copy. Budapest, 7.January 1914

Your Excellency,
Your kind lines gave me the most praiseworthy pleasure not only as such, but above all by the fact arising from them that Your Excellency's state of health will certainly not form an obstacle to spending the time of the stag rut in Skole this year. I may tell Your Excellency how painfully I and all the members of my family, whose affection Your Excellency possesses without distinction in unlimited measure, felt the gap left by Your Excellency's absence during the past year.

Your Excellency's remark about the visit of His Royal Highness the Grand Duke of Hesse aroused in me an abundance of the most diverse feelings; among them the joy of having been the object of His Royal Highness' attention dominated, followed by the pride of having, as a born Hessian, a share in the personality of the sovereign as well as every citizen of the country, concluded by the sense of home compassion which, at every sign from the dear fatherland, illuminates my interior like warm sunbeams.

Every little event in that country, to which I am tied by indissoluble threads of memory and affection, still stands vividly before my eyes, although May 19 will be the fortieth anniversary of the day when I left home as a young man. I still remember the jubilation with which, as children in Friedberg, we used to greet His Royal Highness's great uncle and run after His wagons; I clearly remember the disappointment that the withdrawal of the troops after 1870 aroused in the town, and during my recent visits to Friedberg I was therefore all the more able to understand the joy that filled the whole town when, in mid-October, the military was once again deployed there.

The rich successes I found in foreign lands, which I am certainly not inclined to underestimate, could not suppress the feeling of my belonging to the country of my childhood, and so Your Excellency will

ever feel the pleasure of with which I received the communication about His Royal Highness' remark, which I consider to be the greatest of my successes.

It is also due to this feeling of great veneration for His Royal Highness that I would like to address a question to Your Excellency personally today, which is rooted in the desire to be allowed to express this veneration, even if only in a small form.

Your Excellency is well acquainted with the hunt in Skole and what it holds in terms of versatility, and also His Imperial and Royal Highness Archduke Leopold Salvator, as well as His Royal Highness Prince Ludwig August, of Coburg, who have already announced their appearance again for this year, and Excellency Giesl, who had the pleasure of shooting a bear there this year, have repeatedly expressed their pleasure about it. If Your Excellency would now give me a kind hint as to whether His Royal Highness is a hunting enthusiast, I would consider the honor of personally delivering to His Royal Highness an invitation to hunt in Skole as the crown of my honors experienced in life.

I would be extremely grateful to Your Excellency for a brief information on this matter and I have the honor to express my most obliging thanks for it.

I repeat to Your Excellency the assurance of the warmest sympathy of my entire house, which I join with my most obliging recommendations as

Your Excellency
very devoted

Sr.Excellency
Privy Council
Austro-Hungarian Foreign Orderly Envoy
and Plenipotentiary Minister
Count Thaddeus Bolesta_Koziebrodski
STUTTGART.

HERMANN GROEDEL BUDAPEST 9 January 1914

V. BATHORY-UTCA 8.

Dear Hermann!

Enclosed I am sending you a copy of my interesting correspondence with the Austrian-Hungarian envoy, Count Thaddäus Bolesta-Koziebrodski, which will prove to you in what great esteem I am held by our Grand Duke; it can do no harm at all to become acquainted with such great gentlemen.

Sending you my warmest greetings and many greetings to yours,

I am

Your faithful cousin

[signed] Hermann

February 3, 1914

Liebe Bertha,

From the enclosures you can see that I am going to put together a family tree and ask me the exact dates about our dad, wedding date, year of birth of mom, the exact dates about you, your children and their children. Later you will also get a copy of the family tree when it is completely finished. I already know the dates about Behrmann Groedel and David Groedel, do you know when Aunt Elise was born? - Because of the family tree of Hermann Nussbaum, I contact him directly. I am sending a copy of this letter, he already knows what I want. Ernst has already given me quite a bit of data. Give a copy of this letter to Illy, so that she can send me the necessary data, to Ferdinand Schulhof, Hermann Nussbaum and Herman Hirschhorn.

Nothing of particular interest for today. With kind regards.

Your faithful brother

[no signature]

HERMANN GROEDEL BUDAPEST 29. April 1914

V. Bathory 8

Dear cousin, [handwritten] Liebe Hermann

After a long period of silence, I take the opportunity to send you a copy of my nobility and baron diploma, which I have just completed and which will certainly be of interest to you, to inquire about your condition. I hope it is the very best, as I can assure of myself and my family. I have recently returned to Budapest from a five-week trip to the Orient, in the last part of which my family also took part, so that we could have wonderful days, rich in variety, relaxation and

Impressed there. Otherwise everything is going its normal course here, which was only pleasantly interrupted by the recent election of my son-in-law as MP for Abrudbánya and by the appointment of my eldest son as Honorary Consul to British Columbia by His Majesty. Both young dignitaries are only twenty-six years old and I am pleased that they both are given the opportunity so early to use their really rich knowledge in a beneficial, general manner.

With best regards, I am

[handwritten] your faithful cousin

Hermann

K.U.K. Oest.-Ung.Gesandtschaft

CS.ÉS K. AUSTRIA-HUNGARIAN EMBASSY

July 19, 1914

STUTTGART

Dear Baron !

First of all, receive my best thanks for your previous kind messages as well as the interesting newspaper articles that you sent to me, which came from your pen.

Your esteemed letter with the request to me on the 12th has just reached my hands and I hasten to acknowledge your receipt for the same, thanking you most sincerely. I believe that after His Royal Highness the Grand Duke of Hesse has accepted your invitation in principle, you should now repeat the same in writing, and since the same is naturally due all honors in your hospitality and as a reigning lord before your other high guests to be expected, it seems appropriate to notify Sr. K.H. and to request the choice of the highest date of arrival in this period from the same so that you will be in a position to govern the hunting grounds for H.K.H. You can also mention on the occasion of your other illustrious guests.

I hope for your sake and for the sake of His Royal Highness that it will be possible for him to accept your invitation already this year and I do not need to tell you how happy I will be if my health and all kinds of duties will allow me to enjoy your kind hospitality again this year and to pay homage to the wonderful work of the huntsmen in your beautiful hunting grounds.

With the most beautiful recommendations for yours and best greetings for yourself, dear Baron, I remain your most devoted

Count Th. v. Koziebrodski m.p.

Budapest, July 20, 1914

Your Royal Highness

Please allow me to mention the high honor bestowed upon me in May of this year by the special audience graciously granted to me by Your Royal Highness. In the course of this audience, which I may still consider one of the highest achievements of my life, Your Royal Highness paid such gracious attention to my most humble suggestion that you would like to attend the hunt in Skole this fall, that today, as I am about to leave Budapest for the summer stay in Scole [sic], I would like to take the liberty of humbly recalling this suggestion to Your Royal Highness.

Should the dispositions of Your Royal Highness allow you to stay in Skole for hunting this autumn, I would like to point out, according to the expert opinion of my forestry officer, that the time between September 18 and 20 offers the best prospects for a favorable route. Therefore, if Your Royal Highness intends to carry out the so graciously expressed intention to come to Skole, which would be an honor for me and my whole house, as I cannot imagine it higher, then I may humbly ask you to support me by a kind pardon. I humbly ask you to allow me to arrange everything necessary to reserve the best and most successful hunting ground for Your Royal Highness in the first place.

I may humbly remark that His Imperial Highness, Archduke Josef, His Imperial Highness, Archduke Leopold Salvator and His Royal Highness Prince Ludwig August of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha have already announced their visits to Skole. I may also look forward to the honor of the visit of His Imperial Highness Archduke Leopold Salvator on Thursday, before the beginning of the hunt.

Your Royal Highness will graciously accept the assurance of my greatest respect, with which I remain

Your Royal Highness
most humbly yours

Baron Hermann Groedel m.p.

To His Royal Highness
the Grand Duke of Hesse
and by Rhine
D a r m s t a d t

10.039/1914

His Highness

Baron Hermann Groedel

Budapest

Dear Baron!

I respectfully acknowledge your esteemed letter with which Your Highness sent us your diploma of nobility and baron.

We, the town of Máramarossziget, which is honored to hold Your Highness in high esteem as its honorary citizen, will gladly take the certificate into custody.

We will add it to our archives, which contain documents of many centuries, and give it a worthy place among the diplomas of distinguished men of past centuries.

It shall be an honor for our archives to be able to keep the document for an incalculable period of time.

Szöllőny Antal m.p.

Mayor
Royal Councillor.
[See the section containing a lawsuit that mentions Hermann's honorary citizenship, and his relationship with Szöllőny. Hermann did not like Szöllőny. -jz]

Figure 22.
Hermann Nussbaum's wife, Bella née Fogel

This is from a handwritten letter by Baron Hermann Groedel to the late Hermann Nussbaum's wife in Frankfurt about the passing of Hermann Nussbaum, his close cousin and confidant.

HERMANN GROEDEL

Budapest, ***6 November. 1922***
V. Báthory utca 8.

Dear Cousin,

It is with painful feelings that I have just read the news of the passing of my dear cousin Hermann in the Frankfurter Zeitung.

So long away from my former homeland, I still cling to friends and relatives with many threads of attachment and remembrance, and their passing, especially when it occurs so prematurely as that of your dear husband, in whom I appreciated so many outstanding qualities of mind and heart, always fills me with heartfelt melancholy.

I ask you and your dear family to accept the assurance of my deepest sympathy.

Your devoted cousin

[signed] Hermann

A Bit About Baron von Giesl

SO IT'S WAR! — Baron Vladimir Giesl, the Monarch's ambassador, delivered the ultimatum in Belgrade on July 23 with a 48-hour deadline. And when he received the answer at six o'clock in the evening on the 25th, just as he was flipping through the thick stack of documents, he only said one sentence: "Thank you." — "Truly, we thank Serbia for the opportunity."

Hermann's friend, Baron Vladimir Giesl von Gieslingen, an Austro-Hungarian diplomat, played a crucial role in the events leading up to the outbreak of World War I. His actions as the Austro-Hungarian envoy to Serbia were pivotal in the July Crisis of 1914, which ultimately led to the declaration of war.

On November 13, 1913, Baron Gies von Gieslingen was appointed Austro-Hungarian minister at Belgrade and would play a key role the following year during the July Crisis.

On June 28, 1914, the Austro-Hungarian heir apparent Archduke Franz Ferdinand was assassinated in Sarajevo.

On July 23, von Giesl presented the Austro-Hungarian ultimatum to the Serbian authorities with a 48-hour deadline. The instruction from Foreign Minister Count von Berchtold was to leave the country immediately should the Serbian government not accept all the points of the ultimatum.

The reply was delivered by the Serbian Prime Minister Pasic five minutes before the deadline expired on 25 July. As the Serbian government did not accept all the points, Baron Giesl von Gieslingen declared that diplomatic relations were broken off and left by train half an hour later. On 28 July 1914, Austria-Hungary formally declared war with Serbia and World War I had started. Baron Giesl von Gieslingen's role during the July Crisis has been much debated by historians over the years and some have criticized him for leaving Belgrade too rapidly.

HERMANN'S OUTLOOK ON JEWISH LIFE

Hermann's letters provide valuable insights into his views on Judaism and his personal experiences as a Jewish individual in the early 20th century, reflecting a complex relationship with his religion. Several themes emerge from his correspondence including his Jewish identity and conversion, ennoblement, antisemitism and social dynamics.

He appears to be proud of his heritage, as indicated in a notable passage where he states, "*...I will continue to stand by the Jewish community as long as I live.*" This assertion suggests a strong commitment to maintaining his Jewish identity despite societal pressures and the pervasive antisemitism of the time.

Hermann's experiences with antisemitism are subtly interwoven throughout his letters. He acknowledges the significant prejudice he faced and the criticism from the Jewish press regarding his family's conversion. His letters imply a nuanced understanding of the social dynamics at play, balancing his public acceptance and private adherence to Jewish values for as long as possible.

However, his decision to convert to Christianity in 1919, while allowing his family to convert earlier, indicates a pragmatic approach to social integration and survival. Hermann understood the challenges his family would face if they did not convert, especially given their new status as members of the nobility. This dual approach—maintaining personal commitment while facilitating his family's easier integration—highlights his protective and strategic mindset in navigating the prejudiced landscape of his era.

The letters also highlight the significance of his family's ennoblement. Hermann and his brothers became only the fifth Hungarian Jewish family to be granted the title of Baron. This achievement brought a mixture of pride and recognition from both Jewish and Christian communities, with Hermann receiving around 500 congratulatory messages. The honor of ennoblement was seen as a testament to their contributions and success, but it also brought scrutiny and criticism from the Jewish press, which disapproved of their conversion.

In conclusion, Hermann's letters reveal a man deeply aware of his Jewish roots, navigating the complex interplay of identity, societal expectations, and personal convictions. His strategic decisions regarding conversion and the maintenance of his Jewish identity reflect his adaptive approach to the challenges of his time, aiming to secure the best possible future for his family while honoring his heritage.

Figure 23.
Baron Bernhard Groedel

BERNHARD (1862-1936)

Baron Bernhard Groedel was a skilled engineer, a pragmatic businessman, and a figure of quiet but significant influence within the Groedel's vast timber enterprise. While overshadowed by his brother Hermann, Bernhard played a crucial role in the company's operations, particularly in the technical and logistical aspects of timber extraction and transportation.

Engineer and Innovator

Bernhard was instrumental in the expansion and modernization of the company's logging operations in Transylvania. He designed the narrow-gauge railroad that enabled the efficient transportation of timber from the mountains to national rail networks and ports for export. Additionally, he completed the funicular system at Kommando, originally started by David Horn, which moved timber—and occasionally people—down the steep slopes to Covasna. Though no longer operational, the funicular is still recognized today as a historic achievement.

His engineering acumen extended beyond timber transport; he also built a modest hunting lodge in Kommando, which still stands today. His commitment to industrial efficiency suggests a highly technical and practical mindset, likely making him indispensable to the company's success.

Bernhard's role in the family business was pivotal, though he appears to have been less publicly engaged than Hermann. After Hermann's death in 1930, there are conflicting stories of whether Bernhard resisted attempts to dissolve the company and keep it as Hermann decreed in his will, or that he supported his nephews Richard and Albert, when they wanted to sell the business in the early 1930s after Hermann's death.

Although he was part of elite social circles in Budapest, Vienna, and Bucharest, his interactions with the public and the press were minimal. Even his obituary in ***Pesti Napló*** focused more on the company and Hermann rather than on Bernhard himself. However, his wealth—estimated at twenty million Swiss gold francs at the time of his death (about $138 million in 2025)—reveals the immense success he achieved.

Bernhard was portrayed in *Ország-Világ* as a generous benefactor who not only provided employment for thousands of workers in Transylvania but also ensured their well-being. He was described as a "true father" to his employees, who trusted him deeply. His philanthropy included a 100,000-crown foundation in 1904 and active efforts to prevent Szekler emigration by supporting the local economy. These actions suggest a sense of responsibility and nationalism, particularly in strengthening Hungarian and Transylvanian interests.

Despite his professional achievements, Bernhard was involved in some troubling events. In 1908, his automobile fatally struck a farmer in Szolnok-Doboka County. While his chauffeur was arrested, no further details suggest legal consequences for Bernhard himself.

More notably, in 1919, he was imprisoned in Rákospalota under the communist regime, likely as a hostage due to his wealth and aristocratic status. His imprisonment, alongside other prominent figures, suggests that he was perceived as a political enemy of the communists, though there is no evidence that he actively engaged in anti-communist activities.

His Final Years and Legacy

Bernhard's will, written in 1935, reveals the financial difficulties facing the Groedel company in its later years. With the company burdened by debt, he structured its assets under a Monaco-based holding company, ensuring financial continuity despite economic instability. His daughter, Theodora, was limited to a compulsory portion of the inheritance, suggesting a strained relationship. However, he had provided her with a large piece of property just outside of Budapest a few years earlier. He also made provisions for a woman named Maria Therese Windsteig, granting her a pension from his estate.

His final years were marked by illness and seclusion, in stark contrast to his earlier active role in business and philanthropy. His quiet burial, attended only by his close entourage, further emphasizes his low-profile lifestyle.

BERNHARD'S DEATH AND FAMILY FORTUNE

Pesti Naplo, November 8, 1936

Baron Bernat Groedel was left with a fortune estimated at twenty million gold francs [about $6M USD in 1936[46] = $138M USD in 2025 -jz]

Dissolution of Franz Jóseph's beloved company

(From our own correspondent.) Baron Bernát Groedel, one of the founders of the well-known European Groedel company, died the other day in Budapest. The seventy-two-year-old baron used to play a lively role with his family in the social life of the Hungarian and Austrian capitals. Recently, however, he fell ill and lived in complete seclusion. His coffin was accompanied on its last journey only by his confidential entourage.

The Groedel family of Polish origin settled in the monarchy in the middle of the last century. They engaged in logging and timber trading. Their establishments in Budapest and Vienna were soon mentioned throughout Europe. The company, which continued to operate throughout the entire territory of the monarchy, was led by the two Groedel brothers, Hermán and Bernát, who were able to skillfully exploit the valuables lying fallow in the Hungarian and Austrian forests.

The large-scale activities of the company also drew the attention of Franz Jóseph. The monarch always took a warm interest in the problem of logging in the monarchy. He often visited the Groedel company's site in Vienna and observed the production work with interest. Interestingly, as evidenced by old records, Franz Jóseph usually visited the company in the company of Katharina Schratt[47].

Among the Groedel brothers, Hermán had a very confidential relationship with the ruler. He had free access to the Vienna Burg, where he had intimate conversations with Franz József for hours. Shortly before the outbreak of war, the monarch then issued the order that the Groedel family be presented for a medal. At that time, both the Austrian and the Hungarian governments argued a lot about the method of demonstration, and the relevant factors dragged and postponed the proposal. However, the ruler urged the matter and thus the family of Polish origin received the

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[46] *Calculated via CHATgpt*

[47] *Actress and confidant of Emperor Franz Josef.*

rank of baron in the peacetime constitution. At that time, the Groedel millions were mentioned everywhere.

This short episode was recorded about one of King/Emperor Franz Jóseph's visits to Vienna.

When the Russians invaded the Carpathians at the beginning of the war, the ruler came to the Groedels' Viennese settlement and said during a conversation: — I heard that the Groedel company got new shareholders in Hungary... "I don't know about it," replied Baron Hermánn.

The monarch took out a newspaper from the pocket of his cloak and handed it to the baron. The paper dealt with break-ins in Cípát.

Here, - Franz József said sadly, in the Carpathians, it is no longer Baron Groedel, but Tsar Miklós's soldiers who are producing trees... Then he added: —Well, the Russians will regret this bitterly...

During the war, the Groedel company, which in the economic world was called Franz József's favorite company, continued to operate intensively. He made huge deals. However, after the collapse, there were disturbances in the life of the plant and the company's operational area was moved to Poland, Romania and Czechoslovakia, where a whole host of joint stock companies were founded in its interests.

The affairs of the famous company were constantly managed by Baron Hermánn, who did not let go of the leadership until his death six years ago. After his death, the idea of dividing the Groedel company's assets among the family members came up several times. However, Baron Bernát always prevented these plans and insisted on the unified management of the old company until the last moment.

Now the death of Baron Bernát Groedel put an end to the life of the Groedel company. Experts estimate the baron's fortune at twenty million gold francs, and the family members decided to divide the millions among themselves. Negotiations have begun regarding the million-dollar inheritance.

Orszag-Vilag

April 3, 1904

The national joy over the restoration of parliamentary peace was expressed in noble form by the Groedel brothers von Gyulafalva, who established a foundation of one hundred thousand crowns in memory of the notable event. The portrait of Ármin Groedel, one of the benefactors from Gyulafalva, was published in last week's issue of our paper. Now we introduce the other founder, Bernát Groedel from Gyulafalva, the other head of the large forestry company, who, like his brother, is everywhere where he can be sacrificed on the altar of public charity.

Bernát Groedel from Gyulafalvi lives permanently in Transylvania, in the large timber factory in Gyulafalvi, where he employs no less than ten thousand workers. He is not only the leader of the huge workers' camp, but a true father, a noble caregiver and helper, for whom his employees have sincere trust and love. He has a great sense not only of the needs of the working people, but also of the economic interests of the country, and of the Szeklers in particular, which he seeks to nurture as much as possible.

The large company, which employs so many thousands of workers, is one of the riders of Szekler emigration. Bernát Groedel, as a good patriot, is doing everything he can to strengthen Szeklers, and his large foundation, which was awarded to the Institute of the Blind in Cluj-Napoca by the decision of Prime Minister István Tisza, only increases its popularity in Transylvania.

BERNHARD IN PRISION

Koztelek, May 18, 1924

An excerpt.

In the collective prison. (June 1919)

It being night, we quietly marched into the so-called "small dentist's prison," formerly a women's prison, to its first and second floors, where we were placed in pairs. I was placed in a cell with a modest and quiet merchant named Béla Gyarmathy.

...On the day of our arrival, Dr. Arnold Rothkugel, a resident of cell 95, invited me, on behalf of his companions, to their cell, where they were mostly very alert. I yielded to the invitation all the more because the gentlemen had promised me that they would receive hot meals daily from the city, which they would communicate to me on a pick-and-pick basis. So I went over to the cell, where I found the following: Emil Bacher, ***Baron Bernát Groedel****, Dr. Tihamér Isépy, Dr. Jenő Kozma, Dr. Landauer, Béla Landauer, Pál Meskó, Dr. György Nigrinyi, Dr. Ödön Nyomárkay, Dr. Jenő Rákosi, Dr. Arnold Rothkugel and Pál Sándor. The service was very good; I only took advantage of the hospitality until I had no food myself, which I then communicated.*

Baron Groedel *must have had a particularly good kitchen, for his stews were very good. On one occasion, he surprised us with a very tasty peach compote, and - we denied it - we were thoroughly smacked. In the morning, however, our senior, Jenő Rákosi, started to stir in his bed, then got up and stomped out... The compote must have put him in a good mood! Yes indeed, but this exodus was not so easy, because first the sleeping guard had to be awakened, who then, after impatient knocking and desperate pleading, finally opened the locked double door of our cell. We were all awakened, of course, and as Rákosi did not return for a long time, we began to worry; so we decided that the youngest among us should look into the matter. At that time - my son Paul was not yet with us - Béla Landauer, who has since died, was the youngest and willingly undertook this reconnaissance service. Soon he brought the reassuring news that Rákosi's mood was still troubled, but that no further unpleasantness was to be expected.*

In the first days, the treatment in the prison was strict, we were allowed to walk for only one hour in the morning and one hour in the afternoon. In particular, we were not allowed to socialize or talk to the people in Budapest. Later, however, this situation was alleviated, as after a few days, we were allowed to spend a few hours in

the morning and a few hours in the afternoon in the yard, talking to the people from Budapest and others.

The first week they closed at half past six in the evening for the whole night, and did not open until 6 a.m., when we had to get up, have breakfast, wash up, etc. In the morning we could receive visitors and stay in the courtyard until half past eleven, when lunch was brought, and again until half past twelve, when the staff went to lunch. At half past one we could go down again to the courtyard and stay there until a quarter to six. Later on the situation eased again, we were allowed to stay outside longer, but only for shorter periods, and in the last days we were not locked up at all, not even at night, and we were allowed to stay in the cells together. There were bridge parties as long as the lights were on.

There is no information as to why Bernhard was in prison, but most likely, he was arrested by the communists for alleged anti-communist activities – or more likely for just being Jewish and wealthy.

Bernard's Will

August 19, 1935

I, undersigned Baron Bernhard Groedel, hereby decree - mentally perfectly healthy, free from any compulsion, influence and persuasion - in the event of my death as follows, whereby I note that all decrees of whatever nature that I have made for my death to this day days have met are suspended.

1./ As a result of the economic situation, the assets of the Groedel company became completely immovable. After the same is burdened by a large debt from banks and private individuals, the entire assets are transferred to a holding company that is to be founded and whose headquarters are in Monaco. Based on the agreement that took place between the members of the Groedel Group and the creditors, I am entitled to 9.506% of these holding assets, which, however, will only accrue to me when the creditors' debts are fully paid off with interest.

2./ My assets left in this way and their income should belong to my wife.

3./ The entire furnishings of my apartment in Budapest and Vienna, insofar as they form my property, are the exclusive property of my wife.

4./ The inheritance of my daughter TheoDóra is limited to the compulsory portion, in which, however, the benefits I paid her up to my death, as well as the debt repayments to banks and group companies and the purchase of the Kamaraerdo[48] property made for her are to be included. Since the benefits received from me through my daughter account for more than the compulsory portion, she is not entitled to any further participation in the inheritance.

[48] *A large property in Budapest*

Supplemental to Bernhard's Codicil

August 19, 1935

In addition to my last will and testament of today's xxxxx, I hereby grant my heirs and successors a monthly pension of two hundred and fifty Swiss francs to Miss Maria Therese Windsteig, currently residing in the Siesta Sanatorium, Rozsa Pavilion 77, for a period of ten years, commencing on the day of my death and ending at the end of January 1937, and from that date onwards, three hundred, pengo or eastern shillings per month, as the beneficiary may wish.

Should the holding company, which manages the assets of the Groedel Group after the expiration of ten years, deliver more than 20,000 Swiss francs in any one year in any form for my share, the beneficiary shall also receive monthly payments of two hundred Swiss francs for such years.

The aforementioned sums are not transferable and not bequeathable, must always be paid to the attention of the beneficiary, and expire in all cases upon her death.

A one-time settlement is not permitted, even if the beneficiary gives her consent to it.

This codicil has been executed in two copies, one original and one copy, and both have been unsigned, one attached to my will and the other for the attention of the beneficiaries. ---

The undersigned, as the executor appointed for this purpose, hereby certify that Mr. Bernard Groedel, whom we all personally acknowledge, has declared in our permanent joint presence in German and Hungarian, which we understand, that this deed constitutes his supplementary will...

Groedel Dóra bárónő, Groedel Bernát báró 60 l. e. Mercedesének kormányánál. (Auer karosszeria, Cannstadt).
Baronesse Dora Groedel am Steuer der neuen 60 HP. Mercedes Limousine des Herrn Baron Bernhard Groedel (Karosserie Auer-Cannstadt).

Figure 24.

Dóra Groedel with her father's (Bernhard) 1914 Mercedes

Figure 25.

Art Nouveau Home of Bernhard Groedel, built in 1901 – Dozsa Gyorgy ut. 98

ALBERT (1868-1944)

Figure 26. Baron Dr. Albert Groedel ca. 1903/5

Albert was a lawyer, husband, father and gambler who lost millions at the baccarat tables in Monaco and Paris. He was removed from the business, eventually sent to a sanitarium and exiled by the family to Skole. In 1938, he and his sons, Viktor and Hans, as Jews, were forced to Aryanize their properties and sell them for vastly less than their value including the largest textile mill in Europe and a bank. Albert fathered an illegitimate daughter, and as a final affront, his life ended in Auschwitz.

Born on March 3, 1868, Albert was the youngest of the Groedel children born to Zadig and Fani. He began his education in Regensburg at the Königliches Lyceum, (at least through 1878 at 10 years old), and then his parents sent Albert to St. Stephan boarding school (Gymnasium) in Augsburg, Germany, 110 miles away where he graduated in 1888. In 1882, when Albert was fourteen, his older sister, Frieda, and her husband, Zsigmond Ulrich, moved to Augsburg which may have been when the family first sent Albert to Augsburg. In addition, the family hired Jewish humanities scholar Józef Frank[49], to live with and tutor young Albert. Here, we can see that even as early as the 1870s, the family began moving away from its roots in Judaism, having sent Albert to a Christian academy rather than a Jewish Yeshiva (school), yet hired a Jewish teacher to work with Albert.

Between 1890 and 1894, after he graduated from St. Stephan in 1888, Albert studied law and political science at the universities of Munich, Berlin, and finally, Greifswald, graduating with a law degree. Why he attended three universities is not fully understood. On March 6, 1894, he passed the "examen rigorosum" in front of Greifswald's law faculty. Albert's thesis was titled "The Acquisition of Citizenship," which is available in the Appendix herein.

During semester breaks and between school changes, Albert went home to Máramarossziget to work in his father's timber business. In November 1894, eight months after graduating from Greifswald, Dr. Albert Groedel was officially included as a Board member and registered in the ***Transylvanian Forest***

[49]*https://hu.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frank_József_(újság%C3%ADró)*

Industry Joint Stock Company, a business recently acquired from David Horn in the forests of Kommando near Covasna.

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Figure 27.
Albert ca. 1888[50]

Központi Értesítő (Central Notices): December 6, 1894

November 23, 1894

1894. nov. 23. 91188. sz. 2987/3	Erdélyi erdőipar részvénytársaság Siebenbürgische Waldindustrie Actien-Gesellschaft	Fiók-telep Budapest	Zadig Groedel, H. Groedel, Groedel B., dr. A. Groedel igazgatósági tagok.	Groedel Zadig, Groedel Hermann, Groedel Bernát és dr. Groedel Albert igazgatósági tagoknak ebbeli minőségük és czégjegyzési jogosultságuk bejegyeztetett.	Ullmann Adolf és Blum Móricz igazgatósági tagoknak ebbeli minőségeiknek és czégjegyzési jogosultságaiknak megszűnése bejegyeztetett. (Lásd 1894. évf. 70. számát.)

Board members Zadig Groedel, H. Groedel, B. Groedel, Dr. A. Groedel.

Zadig Groedel, Hermann Groedel, Bernát Groedel and Dr. Albert Groedel, members of the Board of Directors, have been registered in their capacity as such and their right to register as a company.

Adolf Ullmann and Móricz Blum, members of the Board of Directors, their respective directorships and rights as company secretaries are terminated and registered (see No 70 of 1894).

[50]*Picture provided by John Friedberg of Skokie, Ill in 2021*

Eventually, Albert found a way to integrate more fully into the greater timber trade by joining *The National Association of Hungarian Timber Traders and Wood Industrialists.*

April 4, 1897 Magyar Kereskedők Lapja

The national association of Hungarian timber traders and wood craftsmen is a march. It was held on the 25th by Albert Bedő, under the chairmanship of the Member of Parliament, Dr. Unger Berr. The secretary of the association, read the annual report, after which the audit committee made a report on the examination of the fund and the annual accounts. The seven Budapest and three rural board members were re-elected; Lord Adolf and ***dr. Albert Groedel*** *was newly elected. Jakab Kőhn, Dezső Ungár and Adolf Bäck were the auditors.*

Figure 29.
Baroness Gisela Groedel 1908[51]

ALBERT'S PERSONAL LIFE

March 28, 1899: Budapest Napló.

- Dr. Albert Groedel, a member of the Groedel Brothers Wood and Wood Industry Company, engaged Miss Gizella Pollák in Vienna.

On April 6, 1899, in Vienna where he spent many years, Albert married Gisela Katherina Juliette Pollack von Parnegg (September 9, 1873 – ca. 1957) (Figure 29.).

Figure 28.
Albert and Gisela's wedding announcement

Because of their considerable charity and work in expanding and promoting the empire's timber industry worldwide, in June 1903, Albert, along with his brothers Hermann and Bernhard, became ennobled with the name "von Gyulafalva."

[51]*Painting by John Quincy Adams. Considered "lost" somewhere in Monte Carlo.*

*In December of that same year, Gisela's father, Leopold, also became ennobled "... in particular for his effectiveness as President of the Board of the Vienna Merchants' Association and his outstanding activities in a number of other commercial corporations. Already last year, Mr. v. Pollack was honored by the award of the Commander's Cross of the Order of St. Francis Joseph." (Pester Lloyd, Dec 20, 1903)*However, Albert's life had become a bit more complex. In 1892, at age 24 while at university in Berlin, Albert had an affair and sired a daughter.

While writing about Albert in mid-2023, I was contacted by Sylvia Mausfeld in Bavaria, claiming that Albert was her grandfather. She maintained that her grandmother, Erna Döring, was Albert's illegitimate child. Sylvia wrote that her great-grandmother, Auguste Minna Grosse, a seamstress living in Berlin, and Albert had an affair and a child named Erna but never married because Minna was not Jewish. Albert's CV (resumé) included in the documentation for his Ph.D. thesis noted that before Griefswald, he attended a university in Berlin—both the locations and timeframe match.

To prove a family relationship, Sylvia first sent a picture above of Albert as a newly-minted baron, which I had not seen prior, but more importantly, she agreed to take a DNA test. The test returned positive results compared with Zora Svab Maliga, Hermann and Melanie's great-granddaughter, and is, therefore, definitely related to the Groedels. This is not proof of her exact relationship to Albert, but the rest of the verbal history and documentation is consistent.

Sylvia's grandmother was Erna Grosse Döring. Minna, Erna's mother, later married Johann Döring who adopted young Erna, giving her his surname.

According to Sylvia, Albert wanted to meet his daughter, Erna, at some point later in life, but she refused. Sylvia believes her grandmother declined because Albert had abandoned her. However, Erna kept Albert's picture in her safe. One day, Sylvia's older sister noticed that her grandmother's safe was open and a picture of Albert had fallen out. Sylvia's sister was finally told that their real grandfather was Albert, not Johann Döring.

Erna eventually married Paul Rohde, a VP of an important munitions factory in Berlin that had been in business since 1842.

Albert left Berlin and Minna and completed his studies at Griefswald. A few possible reasons for the transfer are that Griefswald had a better law school than what was available to Albert in Berlin, or he wanted to part ways with

Minna because she was pregnant, not Jewish, and he knew they were not going to wed. Of course, it's also possible that his parents forced Albert to transfer, assuming they found out about the child and the affair with a seamstress.

Albert and the Timber Business

It's unclear how integral Albert was to the family business in the early years. However, he did own a considerable share and had signature authority. But, over time, Albert had acquired a gambling problem, so in 1923, Hermann removed Albert from the company's operation because Albert's gambling problem began to impact the company and its finances. There is no information on whether Albert continued on the payroll or received further compensation. Still, by then, he had amassed a fortune, including properties. In 1925, he acquired the Sternberg Mansion in Vienna and spent a large sum refurbishing the property. The mansion would eventually be an Albatross around his neck.

ALBERT'S GAMBLING PROBLEM

Baron Albert Groedel Spends Lavishly 1923

Die Fackel April, 1923, pgs 175, 176

"There has been only one topic of conversation in Viennese society in recent days, a single scandalous affair that has been discussed in detail.

The loss of the game suffered by Mr. (Baron) Groedel, who is well known in Viennese society circles. Mr. Groedel, a well-known personality in all gambling circles, lost the amount of 1½ billion crowns in one night at the Vienna Club last week, which is a considerable sum even in today's numerical terms.

24 hours later, a complaint was filed at the police headquarters by a lady completely distant from Mr. Groedel[52]*, who took the gambling loss he suffered as an occasion to file a suit against the Baccarat epidemic in the leading Viennese clubs. The lady, the police department assumes, merely filed the complaint out of anger that her husband spent the nights at the gambling table instead of at home.*

The Police Headquarters now dealt with the affair and actually received exact knowledge of Mr. Groedel's large gambling loss. As a result, the police chief Schober, in his tactful, but nevertheless incredibly energetic manner, invited the presidents of the

[52]*Later to find out the woman was actually his wife, Gisela.*

three leading Viennese clubs, the Jockeiklub, the Wiener Cercle, and the Wiener Klub, to his office, and, in the face of the complaint and the Groedel affair, made them promise that they would no longer allow baccarat to be played in the clubrooms. Police Commissioner Schober did not conceal from the club directors that he would see himself compelled to have police audits carried out in the clubs.

Mr. Groedel, the big loss-maker, is, however, in a position, we are told, to easily absorb the loss of 1½ billion crowns. He owns a fortune in England, which in initiated circles is put at 600,000 pounds sterling[53]*, and which he got free because he is a Polish citizen*[54]*. Incidentally, we are told that on the evening following the night of loss, Mr. Groedel recovered the handsome sum of 900 million crowns*[55]*."*

Figure 30.

Baron Dr. Albert Groedel in Africa w/Rhino (ca. 1920s/30s) [56]

[53]*Approximately $62 million in 2025. However, that number is excessive as seen in 1927 articles about the ships.*

[54]*This money was most likely assumed from the forced sale of the Groedel ships during WWI, which were based in England. However, the British gov't balked at giving the money to the enemy. See further details in the story.*

[55]*Due to the hyper-inflation occurring at that time, it is difficult to calculate the value in today's currency.*

[56]*Africa photos of Albert provided by Sasha Meyer*

Figure 31. Baron Dr. Albert Groedel in Africa w/Lion (ca. 1920s/30s)

Baron Dr. Albert Groedel Sues the British Government for Back Lease Revenue

November 10, 1927

On November 10, 1927, Albert sued the British government's Administrator of Hungarian Property for the funds from leasing the Groedel ships prior to and during the early years of the war. The amount due the company was £66,000, and Albert was attempting to claim his 1/3 share - £22,000, as the other two-thirds were free from the charges due to the Treaty of Trianon and the Treaty of Peace Order [Hermann and Bernhard had been Hungarian citizens, so they were not entitled to remuneration]. Albert admitted that in August, 1914, he was of Hungarian nationality, but alleged that on 26 July, 1921, or at some date between November, 1918, and 26 July, 1921, he had ceased to be a" national " of the former Kingdom of Hungary" and had become Polish [his claim was that he was living in Skole and was a citizen].

He based this claim upon *(a)* Article 3 of the " Minorities Treaty" between the Allied and Associated Powers and Poland, which came into force on 10 January, I920; *(b)* the fact that he was habitually resident at Skole in Galicia, which on 10 January, 1920, was, he alleged, recognized as forming part of Poland, so that he had become a Polish national; and *(c)* Article 213 of the Treaty of Trianon whereby Hungary undertook to recognize the loss of Hungarian nationality by her nationals who had acquired or might acquire any new nationality under the laws of the Allied and Associated Powers. Alternatively, he claimed that as from November, 1918 the independent State of Poland had exercised sovereign rights over the Galician territory in which Skole was situated, with the result that he thereby became a Polish national before 26 July, 1921, when the Treaty of Trianon came into force.

He lost the lawsuit.

Held: (a) That the expression "nationals of the former 'Kingdom of Hungary'" meant persons who were Hungarian nationals on 28 October, 1918, when the Austro-Hungarian Empire ceased to exist by the deposition of the emperor. (The learned judge herein followed Eve, J., in *Rothschild v. Administrator of Austrian Property,* L.R. [1923] 2 Ch. 542, and stated that, but for that decision and the practice of the respective Administrators of Austrian and Hungarian Property founded upon it, he would have been disposed to hold that the expression meant " nationals of Hungary, treating Hungary as though " it were still the former Kingdom of Hungary," a meaning which would have included persons who became Hungarian nationals between 28 October, 1918, and 26 July, 1921.)

(b) That the plaintiff, being thus *prima facie* within the scope of the expression "nationals of the former Kingdom of "Hungary" in Article I (ix), must (if he was to succeed) establish his exclusion under Article 2 of the Treaty of Peace Order, and under that Article it was necessary for him within six months from the coming into force of the Treaty to show to the satisfaction of the Administrator that he had acquired *ipso facto* in accordance with its provisions the nationality of an Allied or Associated Power. This he had failed to do, and there was no suggestion that the Administrator in arriving at his conclusion had acted in bad faith. Accordingly, the plaintiff's property must remain subject to the charge.

A British newspaper put it this way;

A CITIZEN OF SKOLE.

The case for the Baron was that on 1st October, 1919, he was declared to be, and was recognised as a citizen of Skole by the Communal Council of Skole, which them formed part of Poland, and that consequently at the date of the treaty in 1921 he was not a national of the former kingdom of Hungary," but had acquired the nationality of the Republic of Poland, and was exempt from the charges imposed by the Treaty.

His Lordship followed a decision given by Mr. Justice Eve, and held that the words in the Treaty, "nationals of the former kingdom of Hungary," meant persons who were Hungarian nationals on 28th October 1918. The petition was therefore dismissed, with costs. It was stated that the Baron would appeal.

Albert's gambling problem continued, but what we'll see from an article in the *Kassai Ujság* from April 23, 1932, is that he, as well as others, were swindled out of their money.

Orai Ujság, November 19, 1931

Vienna, November 18th

(Our own correspondent's phone report.) Baron Albert Groedel, 63, who is currently being cared for in a sanatorium in Vienna, has been placed under guardianship. The Baron's private liabilities are estimated at two million schillings.

Baron Groedel was once a co-boss of Groedel's timber wholesaler, but had long since separated from the company and lived in the Sternberg Mansion in Vienna. Until recently, he was considered extremely rich, but most recently his family refused to pay his huge expenses, and especially his gambling debts, which he made in Paris and Monte Carlo, where he spent most of the year.

He obtained the money from so-called "discounters," who made very large sums available to him. One of them was Gyula Gröbel, who at that time lent large sums of money to members of the Hungarian and Austrian aristocracies. Gröbel was associated with Arthur Drach, who, however, obtained the money from a holding company and a Central European timber company.

As Drach had recently been demanding repayment of the sums from Gröbel, who

himself was forced to put pressure on his various debtors. Gröbel, who had maintained a large racing stable under the name Mister Sillerig, was finally forced to dissolve his racing stable and now wanted to make Baron Groedel pay his debts, to which the baron's family responded by placing him under guardianship.

Die Stunde (ANNO), November 19, 1931

Incapacity of Baron Albert Groedel
Difficulties in repaying his debt to the Viennese money lender Gröbel

Financial problems are becoming lively in Viennese society, especially in circles of high finance and the wood industry discussed with whom Baron Dr. Albert Groedel senior, the former chief of the well-known large timber group Groedel has been struggling for some time. Baron Albert Groedel no longer belongs to the Groedel company, he left it years ago and has since lived as a private person in Vienna at the Sternberg Mansion in Ungargasse, which he has owned for several years. Until recently the most distinguished Viennese society was in his house; High aristocrats, financiers, large industrialists, artists were his guests all the time. Now it has become quite quiet in the mansion that was recently said to be bought by Ravag[57].

Baron Albert Groedel, who until recently was thought to be extremely rich, had to impose restrictions on his private life because his family was no longer willing to make the money available to him places that he needed to meet his large gambling debts in Paris and Monte Carlo.

The personal effort that Baron Albert Groedel spent in Vienna and abroad - he spent a large part of the year in Paris and Monte Carlo - swallowed up enormous sums of money that were now disproportionate to his income. Baron Albert Groedel turned to other donors as the source of money, which until recently seemed inexhaustible, was about to dry up as a result of his family's refusal to accept further routing. So he gradually got into the hands of "escomteurs" [discounters, better known as loan sharks] who lent him money at exorbitantly high interest rates.

Now, however, one of these "escomteurs", Julius Groebel, who lent money in abundance to numerous members of the Austrian and Hungarian high aristocracy, got

[57]*Ravag was a public radio company established in 1924 in Austria. It was a joint venture of the Austrian federal government, the City of Vienna, and several banks.*

himself into an awkward situation because the aristocrats left him in the lurch and one of his donors, the well-known wood industrialist Artur Drach pushed for repayment of the money borrowed from the Groebel.

Artur Drach, who was recently said to be moving from Vienna to Paris, did not finance the "Escompteur" Gröbel directly, but through one of his holding companies, the Mitteleuropean Holz AG (Vaduz), behind the none other than Artur Drach hides himself. The Drach's holding company urged Gröbel to repay him, like Baron Groedel, and so it happened that the old wood represented by Baron Groedel was, albeit perhaps unconsciously, indirectly cornered by the young Holz-Drach.

The affair is causing a sensation in Viennese society, as all parties involved in the affair are known in the broadest circles. The "Escompteur" Gröbel, who also runs a racing team under the name of Mr. Sillery, was very popular in circles of the high aristocracy even before the war because he had an easy hand when giving money, even if he was paid accordingly. The great popularity, which he enjoyed among the high aristocrats and turf magnates, finally led to his undoing, since the borrowers, including one of the leaders of the Hungarian legitimate, the son of one of the richest Hungarian landowners and also a leading member of the Viennese jockey-clubs that could no longer repay money borrowed from Groebel.

The high aristocrats, who owed Gröbel many millions of schillings, declared that they could not pay due to the predicament of their real estate, and so Gröbel, through whose hands millions of shillings went, was now the result of the "immobilization" of the aristocrats and the pressure Mitteleuropäischen Holz AG [Central European Wood, AG], which has to demand several hundred thousand schillings from it, has become immobile itself. As you can understand, Gröbel recently sold a large part of his racing team.

As a result of the pressure from Groebel and other creditors, the family of the baron Albert Groedel now felt compelled to initiate the legal proceedings against them. 63-year-old Albert Groedel is now housed in a sanatorium in Vienna and, as we hear, was incapacitated today. Baron Albert Groedel's private liabilities are estimated at around two million shillings.

He probably has significant assets, but the majority of them serve to secure the claims of the big creditors.

The following is a consolidated and summarized version of a long article in the Neues Wiener Journal dated November 19, 1931:

Incapacitation of Baron Dr. Albert Groedel Sr.

In November 1931, the Viennese court ruled on a petition filed by the Groedel family, resulting in the incapacitation of Baron Dr. Albert Groedel Sr. He was placed in a sanatorium due to severe financial mismanagement, primarily caused by his gambling addiction and extravagant lifestyle.

Baron Albert Groedel Sr. had lost significant sums at the gambling table in recent years. When his family ceased financial support, he turned to money lenders, notably the prominent Viennese loan shark Julius Gröbel. Gröbel, facing his own financial pressures, eventually refused further extensions of credit, leading to Groedel's financial collapse.

The case caused considerable public interest, particularly as Baron Groedel was well-liked in artistic and social circles. The affair gained further notoriety because Baron Felix Pollack von Parnegg, Groedel's brother-in-law, was forced to resign from his company due to gambling debts. Shortly thereafter, Pollack von Parnegg tragically took his own life.

A close family relative confirmed that Baron Groedel had stepped down from the Groedel timber company years earlier at the insistence of Baron Hermann Groedel, who had been the firm's head until his death in 1930. His family had long been aware of his excessive gambling, particularly in Monte Carlo, Nice, and Paris, and had sought to prevent further financial ruin. Despite these efforts, Baron Groedel continued his costly habits, accumulating debts of nearly 2,000,000 Swiss francs and 1,000,000 Austrian schillings [equivalent to approximately $9 million and $4.5 million in 2025].

In 1925, Baron Groedel purchased the Sternberger Palais in Ungargasse through the Basel-based Groedel International Holding Company. His wife, Baroness Gisela Pollack von Parnegg, extensively renovated the neglected mansion, incurring substantial costs. An attempt to sell the property to Ravag failed due to its location and conversion challenges.

The decline in Baron Groedel's financial situation was exacerbated by reduced earnings from his investments in timber and his wife's textile business, Hermann Pollack Söhne, while his expenditures remained unchanged. His housing tax alone reached 12,000 schillings annually ($56,000 in 2025). Reports indicated that he had suffered from increasing mental decline, which further fueled his gambling compulsion. He was frequently exploited by money lenders, some of whom charged exorbitant interest rates of 50–60%.

Despite his debts, Baron Groedel's foreign property holdings were estimated to be worth nearly double the amount of his Swiss franc liabilities. If liquidated discreetly, these assets could cover his debts in full. His wife held only a small stake in her family's textile business, and their two sons, Viktor and Hans, had no personal assets. They took a leave of absence from work to manage the financial fallout. Bankruptcy proceedings were considered but deemed impossible, as there were no Austrian-based assets to support such a case.

Ultimately, no private individuals were directly harmed by Baron Groedel's debts, as most lenders were financial institutions seeking interest and commissions. However, the case remains a stark example of the risks associated with unchecked wealth, high-stakes gambling, and the financial vulnerabilities of even the most prominent families.

By April 1932, Albert's financial troubles became further entangled in the Viennese counterfeit card scandal, which shook high society. Investigations revealed that he had suffered immense losses not only in the gaming casinos on the Riviera but also in Vienna, particularly at the Wiener Cercle, a prestigious social club.

It was discovered that the Baron had been a frequent player in card games orchestrated by György Berzeviczy, who manipulated games to the detriment of wealthy patrons. Albert's wife had previously considered filing a police report against the club, but she was persuaded otherwise to avoid a scandal. Now, following the public exposure of the fraud, the Groedel family sought legal recourse, believing that Baron Groedel had been systematically deceived.

The broader scandal implicated many prominent individuals, leading to the resignation of the entire management of the Wiener Cercle, including its president, industrialist Sohranitz. While some members called for the club's closure, it was instead decided that it would be reorganized under new leadership, with a strict ban on gambling.

Ultimately, Baron Groedel was one of many aristocrats and industrialists who fell victim to this fraudulent scheme, further compounding his already dire financial situation. His guardianship and the family's intervention likely prevented further ruin.

GRINIK A.G.

In 1927, Albert created a holding company in Switzerland named "Grinik A.G."

for his properties and other assets totaling approximately 500,000 Swiss francs [approx. $1.9M in 2025]. The board of directors included his eldest son Victor and two lawyers. Sometime in 1933, 90% of the assets were liquidated. A few months prior, Albert, Victor and one of the lawyers resigned from the company. I can only assume those assets were used to pay off his debts as Albert's incapacitation and the removal of assets occurred in close proximity.

Re: GRINIK A.G.
Safehaven Reports[58]
March 1942

Pg 17
commercial business oto.
RC. 8706/18800
Basel, Switzerland
Barfusserslatz 6

ESTABLISHMENT COMPANY:
since was founded on May 24, 1927 and entered in the Basel commercial register

On March 12, 1942, it was deleted after liquidation.

PURPOSE: To acquire and operate industrial and commercial ventures, to participate in all types of ventures, to acquire and promote partnerships and roles. "The conclusion of commercial transactions, as well as the acquisition of movable assets.

SHARE CAPITAL:

This initially amounted to Rs. 500.00. - and was divided into 500 bearer shares of Fr. 100 each on March 14, 1933 by reducing the nominal value of the shares from Fr. 1,000 to Fr. 100.-, to Fr. 52,000.- reduced and divided into 500 bearer shares of Fr. 100 each [I assume these are in Swiss Francs]

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: The only member Dr. Otto Scheidegger, Advocate, from and in Basel signed individually.

---

[58]*SAFEHAVEN was the code name of a U.S.-led effort to block the transfer of German assets out of the country in the later years of World War II. The SAFEHAVEN project also identified and restored looted artworks to their rightful owners.*

GENERAL: The company was established as a holding company for financing transactions of the Baron von Groedel Group, in Vienna. The current founders and owners Dr. Albert Baron von Grödel and Viktor Freiherr von Grödel, Vienna, left the company in March 1932.

The company always had its domicile in Basel, Barfüsserplatz 6 with the lawyer Dr. Otto Scheidegger, where no business activity was carried out and the company only had its legal domicile.

There is no insight into the current activities of this company and the current management of this defunct and liquidated company refuses to provide any information about the company.

American Consulate, Basel.

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Safehaven Report continued...

Pg 18

USG. Swi.122

On March 25, 1932, the two Groedels and Ott resigned, leaving Dr. Otto Scheidegger the sole member of the board.

On March 14, 1933, the share capital of the company was reduced from Fr. 500,000 to

Fr. 50,000.

On March 2, 1942, the company was liquidated.

The company was a holding company and, as appears from the above, its purpose was to manage property, probably real estate, belonging to the Groedels.

Neues Wiener Journal (ANNO), October 1, 1934

Palais Grödel will be auctioned off.

The mansion was built by a prince Esterhazy and was later forced to be auctioned off together with its gardens. The inconspicuous official announcement signifies the temporary scourge point in the changeful fate of the once very well-known millionaire timber industrialist Baron Albert Grödel.

Baron Albert Grödel, who comes from a distinguished Hungarian family of timber merchants who acquired the barony in the pre-war period, acquired the mansion in 1925, at a time when he still had a million-dollar fortune. The building was built by a prince Eszterhazy and was later owned by the Counts Sternberg. Baron Grödel invested more than 150,000 shillings in the building [approx. $425,000 in 2025], which belonged to a Swiss industrial society and was rather neglected. Baron Grödel, who was addicted to gambling, was incapacitated and now lives in a small village in Galicia [Skole].

In August 1943, a reporter from the newspaper ***Magyar Nemzet*** (Hungarian Nation) took a tour of the Kommando sawmill in the Transylvanian Carpathians and later visited briefly with Baron Dr. Albert Groedel. Here's his description of what he saw and heard.

After a lot of bends, descents and ascents, the sawmill finally opens up in front of us for the last turn. On a plateau surrounded by high mountains, in a green environment, the gray-brown mass of wooden workers' houses, shelters, warehouses and factory buildings has a somewhat strange effect. The sawmill does not have a specific character. I can't say that it was built in Hungarian or Romanian style, it is unstylish, that is, you don't need any special imagination to imagine it in America, Siberia or even Finland.

The company has so much to do with the Carpathians that it found logging worthwhile and effective here. It was shared by two interests: the Creditanstalt in Vienna and the Bank de Suisse in Geneva. It is currently being liquidated because fifty thousand hectares [123,000 acres] of forest remained in Romania and there is no raw material left on the Hungarian side of the border, but it was the largest sawmill in Central Europe for a decade. In its furnishings, it can still be seen that the rigid laws of capitalism prevailed in the organization.

The Transylvanian Forest Industry Limited Liability Company occupied this area without being hindered by feudal traditions or patriarchal constraints. They built the colony and recruited the workers. At the time of the boom in the thirties, there

were three thousand working families, ten thousand souls living in the settlement, and I will also place a thousand or more workers in Covasna ***[the nearby town in the valley below.]***

A bit later in his article he visits with the elder Albert in the "castle" that still exists:

Figure 32. House in Kommando

The crystal-clear, fast-flowing, whimsical Basque stream divides the settlement in two. A long bridge fortified from the casino leads to the castle, where the settlement was occupied by its lord, Baron Albert Groedel. The wooden castle fits in stylishly in a landscaped setting surrounded by mountains and forests. No one answers my ring, I try again, silence, I press the doorknob impatiently, I let go and I enter the castle through the garden. An older lady leads to the Baron. Inside the castle is a real fairy mansion. Beautiful wallpaper covers the walls, elsewhere dark-stained, carved wood paneling, brilliant parquet, Persian rugs, antique and modern furniture, copper engravings, pictures and fireplaces that one would prefer to settle next to them. The baron welcomes me in the yellow salon.

The wallpaper is burgundy, the furniture cover is yellow, the fireplace is covered with cornflower blue tiles: the overall effect of the colors is exciting. As I enter, a smiling, short-haired, gray-haired, tip-top gentleman stretches his hands to

me. Fresh and elegant, so much so that I involuntarily look at myself: my heavily crumpled clothes, soiled from a lot of walking, only adds to the unusual contrast. The baron tells me that I farm on fifty thousand hectares, but the new fish farm, which is 28 kilometers older than the historical fish farm, has cut off the farm from the forest and the company must be liquidated. During the economic boom, 110,000 cubic meters of wood were produced annually, and now they are selling the crayfish stock.

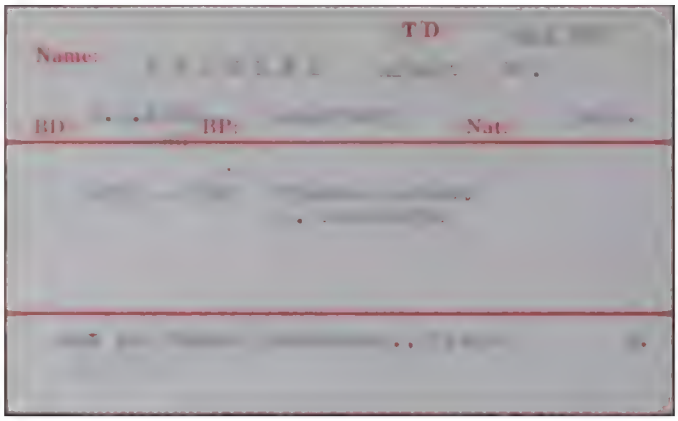
On the first of September, the state will take over the lumberyard, the workers will disperse, he does not know what will happen to them. He has nothing to do with the company anymore. The castle is his, he is not moving. He came here when he was young, he grew up with the landscape, he wouldn't be able to leave. He is very friendly, very polite, and when saying goodbye, he mentions that Antonescu also visited the camp and was his guest. . .

Kovács Imre

Antonescu was Ion Antonescu, and, according to Wikipedia: "was a Romanian military officer and marshal who presided over two successive wartime dictatorships as Prime Minister and Leader during most of World War II. ... An atypical figure among Holocaust perpetrators, Antonescu enforced policies independently responsible for the deaths of as many as 400,000 people, most of them Bessarabian, Ukrainian and Romanian Jews, as well as Romanian Romani. The regime's complicity in the Holocaust combined pogroms and mass murders such as the Odessa massacre with ethnic cleansing, and systematic deportations to occupied Transnistria."

I find it interesting that Antonescu visited with Albert as his guest, but (my guess) since Albert was Jewish, he didn't care and eventually allowed Albert to be taken away to Auschwitz.

Albert is noted in a Yad Vashem list of Jews living in Kommando and other nearby towns deported from Sepsiszentgyörgy, Kézdivásárhely.



Clipping 12.
Albert's ITS Card with birth location error.
A separate document in the file makes the correction.
Augsburg is where Albert went to school.

SKOLE

Figure 33. Groedel Castle - Skole, Poland, 1909

Grazer Tagblatt, December 12, 1907

(Purchase of a large forest domain.) The Barons Hermann, Bernhard and Dr. Albert Groedel, previous owners of two thirds of the forest domain Skole (approx. 40,000 hectares), have purchased the remaining third of the domain from the heirs of the recently deceased Mr. W. A. Schmidt, including all associated furniture, factories (steam saws, fuse wire factory, keyboard wood production) and other enterprises (various logging contracts with the state, or religious fund) and for a price of several million crowns. All of the enterprises, including softwood production from the domain of approximately 10,000 wagons per year, will be continued in the same way as before under the company "Gebrüder Groedel".

Nestled amidst towering mountains and lush forests, and cradled in the basin of the Opir and Stryj rivers, the city of Skole, situated in the Eastern Bieszczady mountains (the Beskids) about 65 miles southwest of Lviv, is undoubtedly one of the most breathtakingly picturesque towns in the Carpathian region. The picturesque hills, teeming with an abundance of wild game, became a prime destination for many prestigious hunting expeditions from Poland and other European countries during the first half of the 20th century, leading up to World War II.

At its heart stood the Groedel Mansion, a French-style residence with manicured English gardens and an artistically forged entrance gate. The courtyard was adorned with a magnificent alabaster fountain, around which carriages could circulate, allowing visitors to admire its beauty and the pulsating fountains from the allegorical figures placed strategically around it.

The estate also became a renowned hunting ground, attracting Hungarian and Austrian nobility. Each autumn, distinguished guests—including Prince Otto zu Windisch-Graetz and the Duke of Alba—gathered for legendary week-long hunting excursions, followed by banquets, symphony concerts, and diplomatic meetings.

Beyond its luxury, Skole was a leader in forestry innovation. The Groedels introduced modern sawmills, a hydroelectric power plant, and a narrow-gauge railway that transformed timber production.

For many years, the Groedel Brothers company maintained its headquarters in Demnya, a neighboring village within Skole. While there is some discrepancy regarding its exact size, according to Wojciech Rożkowski's book "Landowners in Poland, 1918 – 1939," the Groedels' baronial estate in the Beskids spanned a staggering 110,000 hectares of forest around Demnya, Slavsky, and two dozen villages in the Lviv region. With immense pride and justification, the Groedels referred to these lands as the "Skole Estate." Thanks to the Groedels, beginning in the 1920s, Skole emerged as a mecca for European hunters, hikers, and tourists, attaining a previously unparalleled splendor.

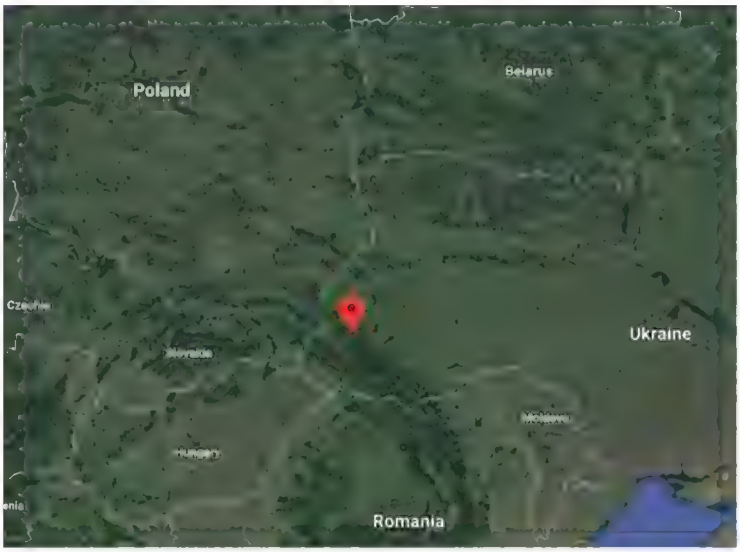


Figure 34. Location of Skole, Ukraine, in the Carpathian Mountains

Toward the close of the 18th century, Eastern Galicia's territorial expanse, due to Poland's first partition, was integrated into the Austrian Empire. Although the Austrian government introduced certain socio-economic reforms, investment in these lands was not a top priority. The region's economic bedrock continued to rest on landlord-based agriculture and craftsmanship characterized by antiquated technology and semi-feudal production. In fact, Galicia languished as

the least developed territory within the empire, with merely four percent of the empire's economic might being allocated to the kingdom of Galicia.

Skolivshchyna, a region entrenched in the foothills of the Carpathians, epitomized this backward economic landscape. With scarce arable land, a significant population of landless peasants, and a dearth of employment prospects in an economically challenged mountainous area, Skolivshchyna mirrored the broader trends in the region.

It is conceivable that the German language, religious atmosphere, and the presence of skilled laborers well-versed in the lumber trade drew Zadig and his associates to Skole, especially after securing a contract from the treasury and embarking on substantial expansion. The original inhabitants of Skole were of German descent, beginning a migration to the region during the latter part of the 18th century. Additionally, a Jewish community had taken root in Skole as early as the 1700s, with 1,063 Jews in the city and its surrounding villages who were subject to the poll tax in 1765. By 1880, the Jewish community had grown to 1,338 individuals, constituting 65% of the total population.

During the latter half of the 19th century, numerous Jews in Skole eked out a living in the timber trade including wood processing and the production of building materials, agricultural produce trade, transportation, and a substantial number found employment in the local match factory. As Skole evolved into a summer mountain retreat in the late 19th century, the Jewish population also found avenues of livelihood linked to the holiday season. The region boasted a vibrant communal and cultural life during this period.

The Groedel Estate

Following the restoration of the constitutional government in Moravia, Count Eugeniuz Kinski (Figure 35.) actively participated in its political affairs. In 1861, he was elected as a deputy to the Moravian diet. Beyond his political role, the count was also a successful businessman and owned a large tract of land in Skole, which he had purchased from his friend Count Stanislav Potocki in 1859. Potocki had received income from the property but did not contribute to its development. In the midst of the 19th century, following the abolition of serfdom, Potocki opted to sell these lands to Count Kinsky, who, for the very first time, ventured into the woodworking industry at an industrial scale, finding considerable success.

In 1862, Kinsky undertook the construction of a substantial sawmill, followed by the establishment of a match factory in 1864. Tragically, the property was left without an heir due to the loss of his sole direct successor, his son Rudolf, who passed away in 1854. Following Count Kinsky's own demise in Vienna in 1885, the family made the decision to sell the property, which occurred approximately one year later, with the Groedels and partner Wilhelm Adam Schmidt emerging as the purchasers.

During his ownership, Kinsky built a small villa in the French Baroque style next to his enterprises in the village of Demnya. The architectural style is described as follows:

"The three dimensions of the building were made on the basis of a rectangle elongated along the longitudinal axis, with a tiered construction of volumes in height. The architectural order has been preserved in the building but ceases to be a constructive element. The functional purpose of the premises began to determine the style and shape of the building. In the appearance of the mansion, baroque features are weakly expressed, in the foreground - the general French national features: high pyramidal roofs, dormers (specific French windows) and the very setting of the building on a supposedly artificial island, surrounded by mountains and green

Figure 35.

Count Eugeniuz Kinsky von Whinitz und Tettau 1883 Previous owner of the Skole property

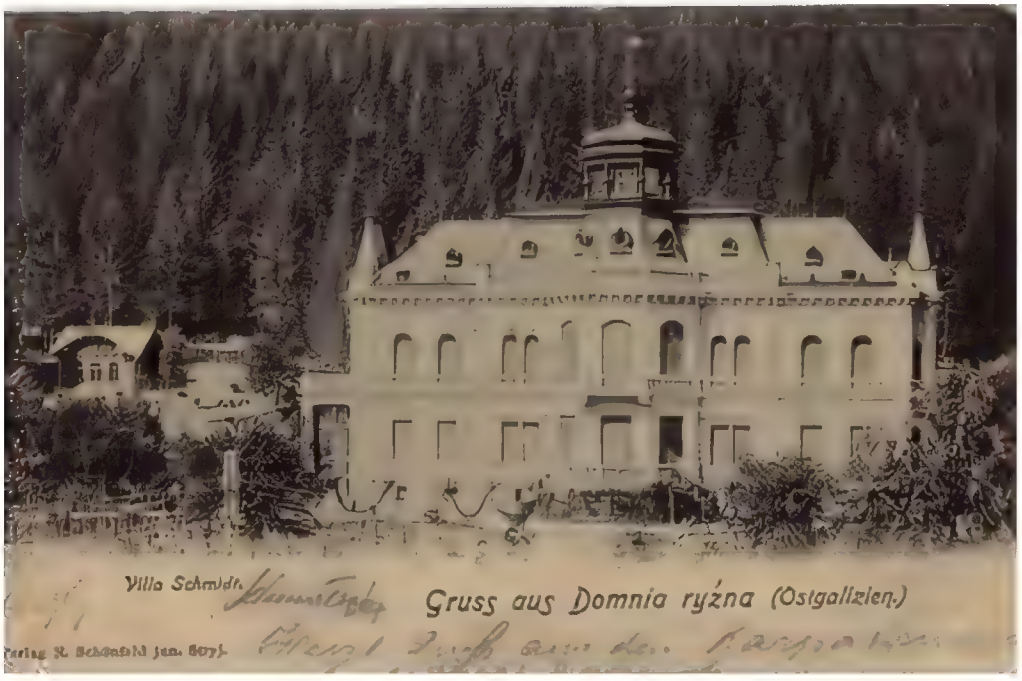


Figure 36.

The original building. The larger text translates to, "Welcome to Demnya-Wyzna. East Galizia."

areas. But unlike the traditional compositions of earlier country castles, there is no enclosed courtyard, formed by the main building and service outbuildings. All office space is located in the basement of the building. Arranged in the form of the letter "P" around the courtyard open to the park, the building is well visible from three sides."

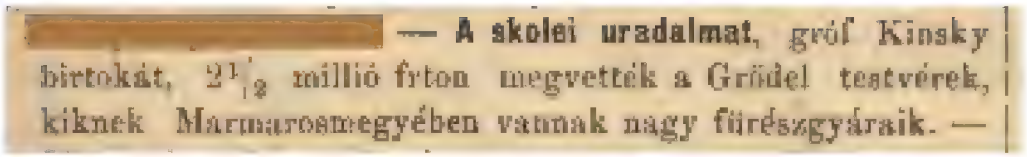
The photograph of the original structure shown in Figure 36 was taken around 1886, approximately when the Groedel family acquired the property. The shuttered windows and overgrown landscaping give the villa an appearance of abandonment or neglect. Equally notable is the name on the postcard: "Villa Schmidt."

The circumstances surrounding the Groedels' initial acquisition of the property remain somewhat murky. A widely circulated but mythic narrative suggests that due to his penchant for gambling, Albert, Hermann's younger brother, along with Schmidt, purchased the property from the Kinsky family using casino winnings. The problem with this story is that Albert was only 19 years old in 1887 attending school in Augsburg, Germany. Albert hadn't yet developed a taste for high-stakes gambling nor had the personal financial means.

Given Schmidt's residence in the Máramarossziget region, it is probable that he took the lead in acquiring the property. Nevertheless, it was jointly and equally owned by Schmidt, Zadig, and Hermann. Numerous newspaper articles assert that the property was acquired for the sum of 2.5 million guilders or forints. A rough estimate of its value in 2024 would be about $1,569,000.

Clipping 13
The Skole manor.

The estate of Count Kinsky was bought by the Grödel brothers, who have large sawmills in Mármaros, for 2 1/2 million frts. [Fővárosi Lapok January 14, 1887]


— A skolei uradalmat, gróf Kinsky birtokát, $2\frac{1}{2}$ millió frton megvették a Grödel testvérek, kiknek Marmarosmegyében vannak nagy fürészgyáraik. —

An 1894 court case in Lemberg concerning accident insurance payments for the workers of the Groedel company[59], included a reference to a Gebrüder Groedel case dating back to late 1887, coinciding within a year of their property acqui-

[59]*Case# 7864, April 25, 1894 (Bayerische StaatsBibliothek, Munchener DigitalisierungenZentrum Digitale Bibliotek) See Appendix for a complete translation*

sition. This legal proceeding clarified that, during that period, the property was jointly owned by Zadig, Wilhelm Adam Schmidt, and Hermann, rather than being a possession of Gebruder Groedel or Albert, refuting the claim that Albert was involved in the purchase.

"The V. G. Court was not able to recognize either of the two complaints as justified in law. In the Min. appeal, the Groedel company had already been recognized by the decision of the t. t. Landesgericht Lemberg of January 29, 1887, Z. 2770 that the landed property of the Skole estate, to which the forests in question belong, does not belong to the company "Gebrüder Groedel", which is registered with the commercial court, but to Zadig Groedel, Wilhelm Adam Schmidt and Hermann Groedel, each with one third..."

In 1896, Hermann inherited his father's share, and in 1905, Schmidt decided to step down from the business, and passed away in 1907. Following Schmidt's passing, his family sold his portion of the property to Hermann, thereby consolidating his title as the sole owner.

Mansion Design

The mansion's architecture emphasizes verticality, from its low basement to its towering rooftop. The first-floor windows feature wedge-shaped rustication, while the second floor is adorned with classical ornamentation, creating a monumental and stately presence. A prominent bay window dominates the main facade, extending the building's full height and transitioning into the attic floor. Topped by a tented roof with dormers and an octagonal dome, this bay window integrates the entrance, which opens to dual staircases flanking the facade. The design embodies a commitment to cohesive facade embellishment across the structure.

The side facades mirror the main facade's attention to detail, balancing symmetry and asymmetry. They are divided into three sections, with a glazed pilaster portico for carriages on the central portion, leading to a second-floor balcony with a balustrade. While the exact timeline for the mansion's expansion is unclear, a 1906 postcard indicates the original structure remained intact until then. The expansion added a wing mirroring the original on the left, with a vertical division blending old and new elements seamlessly, preserving the building's symmetry and rhythm.

Figure 37. Skole Palace

Figure 38. Groedel Mansion, Skole, Interior

Figure 39. Groedel Mansion, Skole, Interior[60]

[60]*Both pictures in Figures 47 and 48 have been colorized. The large, round object (center-right) is the room's heating unit.*

A through span was introduced, framed by an entry portal with Ionic columns and pilasters, featuring a wooden cobblestone floor to soften the sound of passing carriages. Above the span's semicircular arch, two arched second-floor windows and a modest pediment crowned the addition, bearing the family's baronial coat of arms. Since the Groedel family acquired their baronial title in 1905, the expansion likely occurred after that date.

Each room within the mansion boasted opulent furnishings, crafted by the skilled artisans of the company's workshops, and adorned with exquisite paintings created by renowned European artists. The mansion itself served as a showcase for a remarkable collection of rare hunting trophies, procured from the bountiful Skole forests. Among these prized trophies were taxidermized specimens of majestic roe deer, unique bird species, forest martens, wildcats, and even the elusive black wolves.

The opulence extended beyond the interior of the mansion, as the estate featured a substantial library at the disposal of the owners and their esteemed guests. Supplementary structures on the estate included quaint lodgings for the dedicated servants, an additional guest house for visitors, a greenhouse, and well-equipped workshops. Furthermore, a modern garage was thoughtfully provided, housing the latest models of contemporary automobiles. Keeping the grand estate comfortably warm was a dedicated heating facility situated in close proximity. The multifaceted facility regularly played host to a variety of cultural events, including concerts and theater performances featuring celebrated artists hailing from the great capitals of Europe.

Figure 40.

Skole Estate Drawing (2023-2024)

The mansion complex was heated and powered by an ingenious utilization of wood processing waste, from which specialized briquettes were meticulously crafted, leveraging a patented technology attributed to the Groedels themselves.

To enter this grand estate, one had to pass through a splendid wrought-iron gate supported by four rectangular stone pillars, each proudly displaying the Groedel family coat of arms. Guarding this entrance was a Swiss-dressed sentry, responsible for opening the gates for arriving guests as can be seen in Figure 46. These gates were equipped with small wheels, facilitating their effortless opening. Along the mansion's perimeter adjacent to the main road, an exquisite metal fence enclosed the property, handcrafted by skilled artisans in the Barons' own smithy.

Geographically, the mansion was surrounded by wooded mountains to the north and bordered by a roadway, the Opir River, and a set of train tracks to the south. Additionally, the estate encompassed a meticulously designed park, following the style of an English garden extending in an east-west direction.

Figure 41.
Location of Groedel "Castle"

The landscape was deeply influenced by the prevailing romanticism and sentimentality of the era. Within this composition, thoughtful placement of ornamental details and elements was evident, punctuated by the presence of various small architectural features, pavilions, and charming gazebos.

The park was further adorned with a wide array of decorative elements, including potted palm trees, stone vases brimming with colorful flowers, wrought-iron railings, benches, and elegantly designed lanterns, all meticulously crafted by the skilled hands of local artisans. The entire scene was punctuated by expanses of classic English lawns adorned with vibrant perennial flower beds, harmoniously blending with the surrounding landscape.

The central point of the park composition was the mansion, from which smoothly curved alleys departed in a spiral. A large alabaster fountain surrounded by allegorical figures decorated the courtyard, which carriages traveled around while one admired its beauty and its pulsating fountains.

A special place in the mansion complex was the greenhouse. It grew exotic plants: lemons, oranges, bananas, varieties of roses and other flowers, later planted in the park. The greenhouse contained an extensive collection of cacti from around the world that decorated the mansion's rooms. Additionally, the city park had flowers planted from the Groedel greenhouse. The greenhouse was where the nobility gathered for a pleasant stay surrounded by plants.

Unfortunately, no expansive or noteworthy pictures of the park have been

found for that period. Family photos and those in the Ukrainian National Archives of the estate depict only small, localized sections.

At the end of the 19th century, hunters from all over Europe visited the Carpathian hunting grounds, and the trophies won in the Skole Beskids were proudly exhibited at the Vienna Hunting Exhibitions in 1890 and 1910. Many influential guests came to Skole to take part in the hunt. The family forest lands were not only places for hunting; since 1900, it was the first protected forest reserve to have appeared in the Skole region.

The Skole mansion became the family's calling card and showcase for conducting business and hosting influential political figures. Throughout the years, the Groedel family cherished their days spent within its walls, sharing fond memories of their time at the estate.

The map in Figure 42 shows the area owned by the Groedels called "Groedlowo." The map is ca. 1905.

Depicting Skole and the villa, the meaning of the text "Leporello (until 1906)" is unknown.

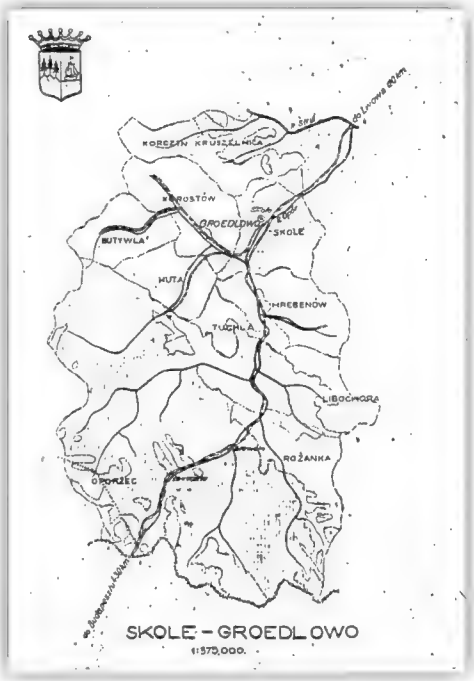


Figure 42.
Map of Groedlowo, property owned by the Groedels

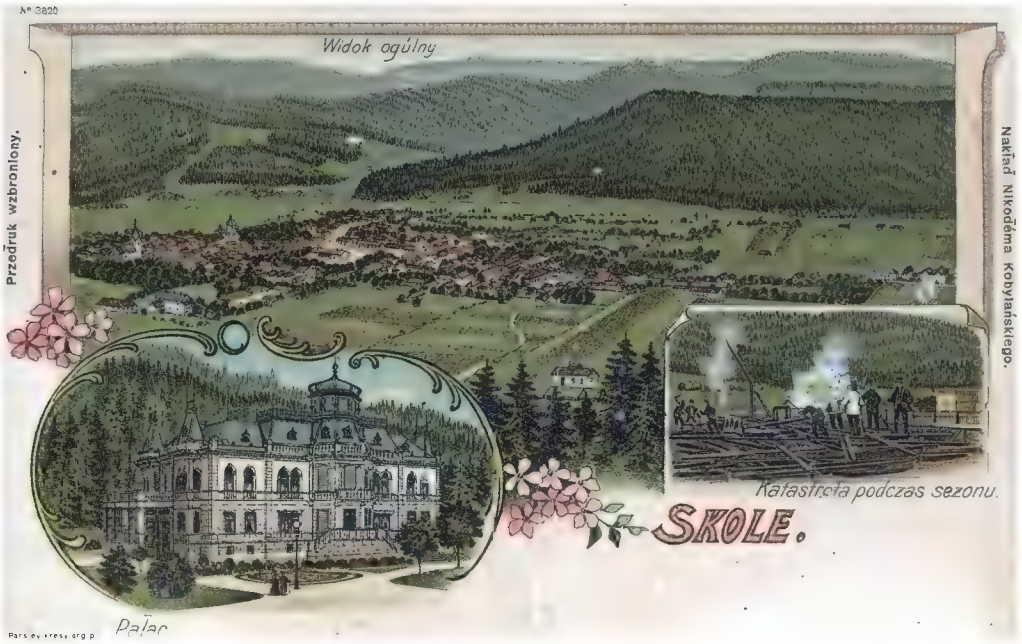


Figure 43.
Postcard with a view of Skole and the villa in 1906.
The Polish text is: Top: "General View", Lower-right: "Disaster during the season."

Figure 44.

A similar-looking postcard shows a slightly different view.

The year is unknown, but it is probably several years after the postcard in Figure 43 as the artwork depicts much greater industrialization.

Figure 45.

Picture of the villa prior to its expansion.

This postcard notes "Villa Baron Groedel."

Landscaping updates and lighting have been installed around the villa. Date unknown.

Figure 46.

The Groedel "Mansion" after expansion and landscaping in 1909. The new section is to the left, including the central carriageway.

The Skole Environs

As part of the Skole estate, the Groedel brothers jointly owned the village of Bohdan (Rakhiv district, Zakarpattia region) - 2,500 hectares, owned in the village of Vyhodi (Dolyna district, Lviv region), village Veldizh (now the village of Shevchenkove, Dolyna district, Lviv region), a total of 33,000 hectares; possession in the villages of Yalinkuvate, Korostiv, Kozova, Libohora, Lavochne, Oporets, Plavya, Pohar, Nizhnya Rozhanka, Verkhnya Rozhanka, Slavske, Tukholka, Dubyna, Grabovets, Golovetsko, Grebeniv, Khitar, Oryava, Oryavchyk, Ternavka, Tukh - la, Tysovets (all - Skole district of Lviv region), as well as the city of Skole. Hermann personally owned property in the villages of Korchyn and Krushelnytsia (Skole district, Lviv region), and in Lviv itself.

The 1891 Business Directory for Galicia lists the following businesses owned by the family:

Figure 47. 1891 Galicia Business Directory

Surname	Givenname	Town	Near Town(s)	Occupation	Occupation (English)
GROEDEL	Gebruder	Skole		Eisen Und Metalwaarenhandler	Iron/metalware Dealer
GROEDEL	Gebruder	Skole		Naphta-destillation U. Raffinerie	Naphta-distillation/refinery
GROEDEL	Hermann	Pohaar		Berg Und Huttenwerke-naphthagerbau	Mining Equipment Dealer
GROEDEL	Bruder	Skole		Ziegeleien	Brick Works
GROEDEL	Gebruder	Skole		Holzdraht-fabriken	Wood Wire Maker
GROEDEL	Hermann	Pohar	Stryj	Berg Und Huttenwerke-naphthagerbau	Mining Equipment Dealer
GROEDEL	Zadik	Holowiecko	Koziowa	Gutsbesitzer	Landowners (with Mansion/farm)
GROEDEL	Zadik	Korostow	Skole	Gutsbesitzer	Landowners (with Mansion/farm)
GROEDEL	Zadik	Korziowa		Gutsbesitzer	Landowners (with Mansion/farm)
GROEDEL	Zadik	Lawoczne		Gutsbesitzer	Landowners (with Mansion/farm)
GROEDEL	Zadik	Libochora	Tuchla	Gutsbesitzer	Landowners (with Mansion/farm)
GROEDEL	Zadik	Pohar	Poziowa	Gutsbesitzer	Landowners (with Mansion/farm)
GROEDEL	Zadik	Rozanka Nizna	Tuchla	Gutsbesitzer	Landowners (with Mansion/farm)
GROEDEL	Zadik	Tuchla	Miekisz Nowy	Gutsbesitzer	Landowners (with Mansion/farm)
GROEDEL	Zadik & Co.	Tysowiec	Koziowa	Gutsbesitzer	Landowners (with Mansion/farm)

The Groedel Brothers' business in the Skole area transformed into a diversified industrial complex, encompassing various ventures such as metalworks, a naphtha distillery, brickworks, and mining equipment. Their sawmill and planer industry in Demnya provided a wide array of machined wood products, including cleaned logs, planed boards, furniture lumber, and exceptionally thin rails that were utilized in the production of musical instruments, particularly violins, harps, and balalaikas.

To accommodate their workforce, the Groedels constructed multiple employee buildings equipped with comprehensive social amenities. Six four-family houses were built for the staff, while seasonal workers were accommodated in a hotel and a casino. This forward-thinking approach predated practices later adopted in the Second Polish Republic, where similar housing estates with social, sports, and cultural facilities were established by industrial ventures such as the "Polmin" refinery in Drohobych and a modern sugar factory in Chodorów.

Furthermore, the extensive maneuvering and wood yard situated at the Demnia sawmill on the outskirts of Skole was illuminated with electricity, courtesy of a private power plant owned by the Groedel brothers. Hermann and Melanie's son, Arthur, displayed an avid interest in tracking technical innovations through specialized publications and implementing them in practical applications.

Upon acquiring the property in 1887, the business also inherited a wealth of assets, including two large steam saws, numerous smaller sawmills, a match factory, a machine-building facility, and various other enterprises. Intriguingly, the Groedels did not make any immediate cash outlays, opting for installment payments instead. To secure capital, they initiated the sale of substantial stocks of sawn timber. The opening of the Stryj-Skole railway in 1885, followed by its extension to the bustling city of Mukachevo, situated 75 miles southwest, played a pivotal role in the rapid expansion of the lumber business in the region. The construction of this railway through Skole fostered significant growth in the city and its surroundings, with the Groedels contributing notably to the flourishing recreational economy.

The Groedels established substantial sawmills, equipped with steam-powered circular saws, in Demnia, Stryj, and Oporec. Additionally, they operated a water sawmill in Świętosław. To facilitate the transportation of logs, primarily beech, from the mountainous regions to the valleys, ten sluices were strategically erected on the tributaries of the Opór and Orawa rivers, effectively creating reservoirs to float the timber downstream.

Narrow-gauge railway tracks were laid down, totaling 47 kilometers (29 mi) by the close of the 19th century. These railways served a dual purpose, facilitating the movement of logs and people. The track routes were thoughtfully designed so that laden wagons could descend under their own weight and were subsequently hauled back up with the assistance of horse teams. In due course, the Groedels invested in modern locomotives with elegant designs. Initially, the timber was transported to Odessa. As the Eastern market became saturated, the timber trade expanded to Trieste and Rijeka (Fiume) on the Adriatic Sea, serving as pivotal points for onward shipments to England, Germany, and France.

In pursuit of enhanced efficiency, the company implemented a novel forest management system. They partitioned their Carpathian holdings into nine distinct forestries: Skole, Grebeniv, Tukhlya, Lybohora, Rozhanka, Oporets, Korostiv, Butyvlya, and Huta, each overseen by professionally trained foresters. The central administrative hub was situated in Demna, a village within the Skole forestry.

To develop a comprehensive management strategy, the Groedels adhered to four fundamental principles: safeguarding the forests, nurturing their growth, practicing reforestation, and orchestrating timber harvesting. Their challeng-

es encompassed timber extraction, mountain transportation logistics, and the imperative renewal of forest cover.

After an exhaustive assessment of the Skole forests, experts determined that a continuous felling approach within designated areas, followed by the planting of three-year saplings, would be most beneficial. The Groedels considered the fact that the forests adjoining the main highways had already been depleted. To surmount the challenge of transporting timber from new logging sites situated in remote areas, they embraced narrow-gauge railways as the most logical solution. These narrow-gauge railways complemented the existing wide-gauge railway network from the late 19th century onwards. In this endeavor, they acquired modern narrow-gauge locomotives from the esteemed German companies Krauß & Comp.

Simultaneously, they refined the logging processes along the tributaries of the Opir River, erecting ten sluices at gateway locations to facilitate the transport of beech logs from the mountains to the valleys. All of these gateways featured telecommunication systems, a critical component in the efficient management of the rafting operations. Additionally, a hydroelectric power plant was established within the Sviatoslav tract on the Oryava River, a tributary of the Opir River, providing a reliable source of electricity.

In 1892, the total length of the railway tracks measured 13.6 km (8.45 mi). By the dawn of the twentieth century, this network had expanded to over 70 km (43.5 mi), capable of transporting up to 70-80 thousand cubic meters of wood annually.

The baron's entrepreneurial endeavors created a unique opportunity for the employment of local residents in a region that had long grappled with substantial unemployment. The establishment of railways, power plants, sawmills, roads, along with the operation of wood and stone industries, not only proved profitable for the proprietors but also played a pivotal role in advancing the economy and bolstering the socio-cultural fabric of the Skole region. The Groedels, in their commitment to enhancing the communal and social landscape, made significant contributions.

In the early stages, their company provided employment to over a thousand workers, a number that swelled to as many as six thousand during the most productive periods. To accommodate their workforce, they embarked on con-

structing fourteen five-apartment buildings, complete with sanitation facilities, and erected outbuildings along the river. Additionally, six four-apartment cottages were individually built to house the administration. All these structures were crafted using bricks produced at their own brick factory. A water supply system was thoughtfully developed to furnish clean spring water to wells located near each building. During the winter months, workers received complimentary firewood for heating.

Dedicated to advancing both their corporate interests and the well-being of the community, the Groedel brothers made substantial investments in the growth of Skole. This included the establishment of hospitals, clinics, baths, primary schools, and more. They introduced celebrations for the workers and fostered a sense of community with the provision of a brass band and the formation of a football team.

Figure 48.
Groedel Brothers band

Groedlowo

"Groedlowo is the part of the town of Skole on which the Groedel woodworking industrial site is located with its offices, official quarters, workers' apartments, etc. There is the castle of the baron family, a mansion, the splendid villa of the factory director, as well as the separate school of the estate, where our sons stayed and the casino, where we all had so many excellent meals." (author unknown)

Figure 49.

"Groedlow" after WWI. Notice the villa's rebuilt roof (large building on the right).

In addition to sawmills with a well-developed wood transport network, which went to many European countries, the Groedels created a furniture factory, a basketball court, and established trout and crayfish farms on the rivers and streams surrounding Skole, and electrified the whole area. It was indeed a kind of state within the state. And even the signpost placed on the road from Stryj informed: "The Skole-Groedlowo Estate".

Figure 50.
Locomotive pulling logs

Relations between employees and employers in the Groedel brothers' production plant complex were legendary. This is illustrated by the story of a sawman from Świętosław, who, working in a sawmill, took home a few boards without notifying the owner. After receiving this message, Groedel called him to his office and asked: "Am I paying you wrong? Do you need a loan?" "No," answered the watchman. "Then why did you take those boards? Go to work and don't give me any more bad evidence that I'm not paying you enough and that's why you have to steal wood from me."

The news of this conversation spread to all employees of the Groedel brothers' sawmills. And there was no second case of lumber theft. It is worth knowing that Groedlow's employees, over a thousand people, received free firewood. The apartments were renovated at the company's expense. A laborer whose child was born received a bonus, transfer and a free factory cab ride on the baptism day to the church or synagogue.

There were also Groedel caravans rented for funerals, accompanied by a company orchestra. For Christmas, the youth received parcels. Caring for the crew's social conditions, the Groedels cooperated with trade unions and a strong PPS[61] party organization, led by Rudolf Dobosiewicz, assisted by Jędrzej Moraczewski from nearby Stryj, later prime minister in the Second Polish Republic.

In 1925, an accident happened near Skole. A group of thugs lurking under the bridge at Opora attacked a horse-drawn carriage of the main cashier of the Groedel Brothers. It was a payday and the robbers thought that the crew had a big suitcase with them. Attacked with the driver, he defended himself desperately, but he had no chance. Killed in the neck, he died on the spot. To the bandits' despair, the suitcase was empty. They fled the robbery with empty hands. The police could not track them down. Groedel decided to erect a monument in this place to the cashier describing the situation. It stands there today, except that in the communist years the cross towering over the sandstone obelisk was removed.

Deutsches Volksblatt für Galizien: November 22, 1912

"Demnia wyzna. (Report on the Germans there). Demnia wyzna, located in the Skole district, is a factory town which belongs to Baron Groedel's estate and is only inhabited by workers and officials who belong to the factory company. In earlier years, when the local factories were still in full operation and Mr. A. Schmidt, the former co-owner of the estate, was still alive, a lot of Germans lived here. But when Mr. Schmidt died 7 years ago and the factory operations were almost completely stopped, many Germans and other workers emigrated from here. The population of Demna, according to the last census, is as follows: 887 males, 737 females, = 1624 in total; of these: 948 Roman Catholic, 375 Greek Catholic, 289 Protestant, 12 Israelite; by nationality: 801 Poles, 499 Germans, 290 Ruthenians, 21 Hungarians, 13 Czechs and Italians. In addition,

[61] *Polish Socialist Party*

in Swiatoslaw, near Demnia, there are 45 residents who are of German nationality. In Demnia there is also a 4-grade private public school. It is maintained by the authorities. The language of instruction is Polish and there are currently 5 teachers, one of whom must always be German, as this teacher gives the Protestant children their religious instruction in German. Unfortunately, the German children at this school are brought up very strongly in the Polish spirit and even the permanently employed German teacher, a certain Miss Madzia, allows herself to speak Polish with the German-Protestant children during religious instruction. Naturally, the German parents complained to the relevant authorities about this in order to remedy the problem. The Roman Catholic German children receive religious instruction from the Catholic priest from Skole, naturally in Polish, and are thus trained to be renegades. After the bombardiers and leaders of the Germans, Mr. Schmidt, Mr. Director Weissbach, Mr. Teacher Keipper are dead, but the factory inspector Mr. Ludwig Faaß, who was particularly committed to the Protestant... Germans, who always warmly welcomed the idea, "will soon leave Demma to retire, the Germans are currently without any money. It is therefore not surprising that most Germans are emigrating to find a better life. The Protestant Germans of Demna receive German services every fourth Sunday and every second of the three major holidays in the local school, for which the Protestant pastor comes from Stryj. The Catholic Germans have to go to church in Skole for services, but only Polish sermons and songs are given, so that they never hear a word in their native German. It is no wonder that the local Protestant Germans hold on more firmly to their ethnicity than their Catholic brothers. Proof of this is that almost all Protestant men belong to the association, while only a few Catholic Germans are members of the association, including the more educated ones who do not allow themselves to be intimidated by their Polish priest. The founding of a local group has already been discussed several times. considered, but in view of the circumstances described, the idea had to be abandoned."

The Skole Sawmill

Figure 51.
Lumber Workers

Figure 52.
Groedel Lumber yard, Skole

To maintain the entire production complex, auxiliary shops were created: repair and mechanical, transport, and warehousing of finished products.

Figure 53-54.
Grodelow after WWI

Figure 55.
Skole sawmill

Figure 56.
Skole sawmill

Figure 57.
Skole sawmill

Figure 58.
Skole sawmill

Figure 59.
Employees with narrow gage rail cars

In the main hall of the sawmill in Demnya, hung the slogan of the Czech industrialist and founder of the shoe company "Bata" Tomas Bata: "People - think, machines – toil," and "Operate machines ruthlessly but wisely," which showed that the Groedels may have been inspired by the Czech businessman and admired his ideas for organizing production processes. They were as follows. First, the pace of production must be high, literally dizzying. Secondly, to demand the maximum return from the workers, the owner must give them a lot, create decent living conditions for the workers and organize their leisure. Bata said: *"The subject of our pride and stimulus to further tireless work was what we saw - we give a new, previously unknown life for our region, develop and strengthen the well-being and education of our people. This is the desire to create, to give more and more people the opportunity to receive the benefits that our company has provided to both its employees and customers."*

On the occasion of the birth of a child, the worker received assistance from the company. Parents and godparents were taken to the church or synagogue by carriage. For a funeral there was a black (for the elderly) and white (for the young) hearse, on which the coffin with the deceased was taken to the town of Skole to the cemetery. The funeral was also paid for by the Groedels. There was even a football team in Demnya, which often went to competitions in Stryj and Drohobych. The barons were also proud of their brass band, which had 36 musicians. They performed at festivals at the Casino, in Butivl, at government festivals in the city, and at funerals. In a short time, a primary school was built that taught in Polish. A hospital with an outpatient clinic, a bath house and other buildings were also erected by the Groedels.

The barons loved to organize a holiday for their employees. In the summer, workers and their families traveled to Butyvlya by narrow-gauge railway. A barrel of beer was available for men, and sweets and ice cream for women and children. It was usually on May 1, Workers' Day, and Mother's Day. On New Year's Eve, December 31, the Casino hosted a ball at which the company orchestra played. The tables were decorated with southern fruits - oranges and bananas from the barons' Skole greenhouse. For the children, the family arranged entertainment with sweets and fruit for the feast of St. Nicholas and Christmas in the casino. They sang, danced, and recited poems. In later years, Baron Richard Groedel was always present at such a holiday, and presented each child with a silver coin worth two zlotys.

The Barons also established a nature museum in Demnya. In Grebeniv there was a nursery where trout were bred. One of the springs in the Skole Beskydy National Nature Park is still called Alberto for Baron Dr. Albert Groedel.

Wages were given to employees every Saturday in an envelope with the seal and signature of the cashier. For earthworks, the worker received 3-6 Austrian crowns a day. The sawmill worker and his assistant received 2-4 crowns for 12 hours of work. During the time of the Republic of Poland, work was ten hours. For a shift, a sawmill worker was paid 42 zlotys, and a mechanical workshop worker 15 zlotys. The head of the narrow-gauge railway station received PLN 300 per month, the driver per shift - PLN 6, his assistant - PLN 4, the freight train conductor - PLN 2.

As noted earlier, prior to World War I, the Groedels worked closely with the trade unions and the strong Polish Socialist Party. That is why the social system in the brothers' workplaces was at a very high level for those times. Evidence of how close the relationship was between owners and their employees can be seen from the murder of a cashier who worked for the Groedels. This occurred in 1925, when a group of bandits hidden near the bridge on the Resistance assaulted the horse-drawn carriage of the main company cashier passing by. It was a payday and the robbers thought that the large suitcase the cashier had with him contained money for the crew. The assaulted cashier defended himself bravely, but was doomed and unfortunately, died as a result of knife stabbing. As it turned out later, however, the suitcase was empty, and the police never managed to discover the perpetrators. On this occasion, the Groedels decided to erect a monument commemorating the tragic death of their employee, which still has a description of the entire event. The monument is also a rest stop for many hiking trips, and although it has managed to survive the passage of time, the cross on it was deliberately destroyed during Soviet times.

Figure 60. Groedel coins

At the request of women whose husbands drank the money they earned, the firm began to pay half of the salary in state money and the rest in Groedel's coins, for which the goods could be bought only in the company's stores.

The Impact of War

The business and the family thrived until the outbreak of the First World War. Unsurprisingly, the war had a devastating impact on the family's enterprise in the Carpathians, as it swept through Skole on two occasions, leaving behind significant and heart-wrenching destruction.

The northeastern borderlands affected by the Russian invasion in the fall of 1914 and the southeastern borderlands, which were in a critical situation due to the Romanian attack in the summer of 1916, were decisive from the point of view of the country's wood and forestry economy. Forest management in these areas had to be suspended several times. The withdrawal of the Russian units in the north-eastern areas did not mean the restoration of normality either, because military parades and the transport of the wounded, as well as the requisitioning by the Hungarian army, were frequent. In addition to the local population, treasury forest management was also in a difficult situation and at the limit of its operability[62].

Skole Falls Victim

In October 1914, while the Groedels were absent, Skole fell victim to an invasion by Russian Cossacks, resulting in widespread devastation in the town. Two separate newspaper reports were published, each providing only partial accounts of the events in Skole and at the estate. To provide a more comprehensive overview, these reports, published on October 20th and 27th, have been translated and merged into a single narrative. The reports emerged after the Russians had occupied Skole for three weeks and were subsequently expelled by Hungarian soldiers.

"South of Skole is Groedel's sawmill called Demnya. This is where the serpentine crossing the Carpathians leads. The Russians built barricades of backlit pine trees on this road to stop us. Barricades were also made at Demnya on the railway bridge and country road. The pine trees and the sawmill were set on fire with the aim of causing our army a delay of two to three days. Luckily, our team put out the fire in short time and marched to Skole at 3pm on the 11th of this month.

In Lavocne [23 miles south of Skole], the station is burned down, and whatever can

[62]*ttp://www.multunk.hu/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/baloghr_homorp_21_2.pdf*

be destroyed and damaged with a rifle butt. But what can be damaged in a (railway) station with a rifle?

The Polish and Jewish population [in Skole] welcomed us with enthusiasm. The population hugged the soldiers. The commander of the invading army, Colonel F., was greeted with a speech by the railway inspector László Goldberger.

Russian rule lasted for three weeks in Skole. Linen was stolen from the unoccupied flats, furniture and pianos were smashed. The Cossack horses were housed in flats. Those who remained in Skole and volunteered to host enemy soldiers did well because the Russians only rioted in the unoccupied flats. Groedel Castle was set on fire, and the right-wing section of the castle was burned to dust, but the furniture was left in a pile. The wall-mounted safe was blown up with dynamite. Rumors claim they found 30,000 crowns.

Leaving Skole, the Russians took a stand on a hill north of Stryj. The commanding regiment immediately sounded the alarm and attacked the enemy in the wee hours of the evening before his reinforcements could arrive. During the night hours, a huge struggle developed. The people in the area were awake and frozen, listening to the cannon fire.

The battle lasted until the next afternoon, when our troops managed to bypass the enemy in the Stryj Valley and force him to retreat towards Orom. The Russians suffered a great loss in this battle, and General Paul Pawlóvics also fell.

The Russians fled frantically through Stryj and retreated north.

The following is a passage from the book "With the Austrian Army in Galicia" published in 1918...in the chapter titled: "The Retreat into the Carpathians"...

November 5th,

It was always the same story. By midday we had received four different orders: 1. To be ready to start. We were ready. 2. To parade the men for anti-cholera inoculation. A party of our men went off for inoculation at once, God knows how. 3. To wait in the open. We did so, lighting fires and cooling potatoes. 4. To take up our quarters in a saw-mill. We took up our quarters, swearing lustily.

If I remember rightly, this saw-mill, belonging to the Grödel, Jews, was absolutely destroyed. The machinery – which had cost millions- was all smashed up. The co-

lossal boilers were broken in, the sheds in fragments., the tools destroyed, the stocks scattered and planks littered the whole place. Only the great baulks of fir had defied the fury of war and were still lying intact.

The war's impact on Skole, the Groedels, and the estate was far from over. Merely a few months later, the Russians made a second incursion, causing further damage. The following paragraphs again provide a consolidated account of this subsequent invasion.

In February 1915, the troops of Viennese-born Lieutenant-General Peter Baron von Hoffmann, who had responsibility for the security of the Hungarian border in the Carpathians, were in a heated battle with columns of Russian troops of General Brusilov's 22nd Infantry Corps on the Komarnicki Heights, not far to the west of Skole. As the Russians made progress and made it into Skole, they began looting and burning the production shops in Demnya. When they reached the Groedel Mansion, they put all of the expensive furniture together that had been left from the first invasion, poured kerosene over it and set it ablaze, the resulting fire then burned half of the castle destroying the center and right (original) side of the structure.

It wasn't until three months later in May, when the German Uhlanian team [Polish-Lithuanian light cavalry] arrived on May 14 at four in the morning, that the Russians were forced out. The Hungarians had placed cannons atop the mountain above the Groedel castle and fired heavily at the Russian positions, but were careful not to damage the town. The Russian retreat took place so quickly, frantically and messily that the Russians couldn't finish their destructive work, yet they still had enough time to set fire to the Groedel's huge main colony, which was completely destroyed, as well as the soda and candle factories.

The destruction wrought by the Russians during the second occupation, testified that they were aware that they would not return. With the exception of the Groedel mansion, they did not set fires or destroy much during the first invasion the previous October. The hundreds of white triplets and wooden crosses buried around the church and in it, reveal the losses from the battles around Skole.

There are no family accounts or published narratives that shed light on whether the Groedels managed to preserve any family heirlooms, artwork, or antiques, nor do we have information regarding the timeframe within which the family, employees, and caretakers vacated the premises before the arrival of Russian

forces. However, the rumored presence of money left in the safe suggests that their departure might not have occurred long before the Russians arrived.

Within days after the Russians left is when the pictures below were taken.

Figure 61.
Ravaged Groedel Mansion – May 1915

Figure 62.
Ravaged Groedel Mansion – May 1915

Figure 63-64.
Ravaged Groedel Mansion - May 1915

Figure 65.
Ruined interior of the Groedel mansion by the Russians - May 1915

In June, a few weeks after the Russians were pushed out of Skole, Rabbi Dr. Rosenak published the following description of the situation in the Jewish People's Newspaper:

Skole under Russian rule (June 26, 1915, Jewish People's Newspaper)

"By Rabbi Dr. Rosenak

Skole is on the Lavocne-Stryj-Lemberg line of the Eifsen Railway; it has 7000 inhabitants and used to be a very nice town. The vines stayed there for 7 months. It was the seat of Russian divisional command; the chief of the command was Baron Brinden who came from a German family. As a result, the Russians feared that he could betray them to the Germans and had a whole staff of secret police constantly guard him.

Coming from Hungary, the first sight is Baron Groedel's huge sawmill, which was completely burned down, and the Baron's castle, which was destroyed and burned during the first Russian invasion. They lifted all the furniture from the magnificent castle, even the benches in the garden were torn out. They were also looking for money, and according to one story they are said to have found 30,000 crowns in the wall.

In the city itself, apart from dirt and dung heap, no great damage has been done. Immediately before moving out, they lit the barn at 4 points, but the few residents were rushed away to avoid the danger in time. Incidentally, the city is as if it had suddenly died out under a higher command. Of course, it has only been 4 days since the Russians left.

In the main street there is a so-called market place, on which there used to be a busy market, now there are only 2 old barracks in which schnapps, sugar and snow-white tasty bread are sold, similar to the one in Tarnow.

No lights in the street, the Russians smashed all the acetylene lamps. Not a single hotel, no guest house, no art in the whole city. Coffee house is an impossible, unattainable wish. There are no citizens in the streets. Biele has fled; the Russians dragged all the Jews along. However, some have hidden themselves in the cellars and forests and have escaped Russian captivity. They report that the Russians tortured them constantly, forced them to clean the streets and trenches. The city commander, Lieutenant Korman, drove them himself with the stick. Another commander, named Kulicky, gave a Jew Glattstein 50 stick blows on Ossener Strasse because he did not want to give him 3 Kr 38 Heller for a ruble after the commander himself had set 2 Kr 55 Heller. They ransacked all of the shops, but did not seriously destroy the apartments." [Kr=Kreuzer: Austrian currency of the time]

Another newspaper published this description:

Az Est [The Evening]: November 7, 1914

In the valley of the Stryj

— From Est's regular correspondent

— Skole, November 5.

I am writing a report alongside the most sublime music in the world. The cannonade began early in the morning and, with a small interruption at noon, is ongoing at three in the afternoon. While yesterday only a cannon shot could be heard here and there, today the sound of the shots flow almost into each other. The returning school population welcomes the gunner with one accord. It contributes to his calmness that he already knows the sound of their bed and knows that our cannons are sounding; the Russians are so far away that the sound of their cannons cannot be heard here.

...

Skole, this small Galician town built of villa-like houses, once a commercial center, is now purely a military town, with civilians only there to serve and help the military. Since the invasion of the Russians, the population has yet to return in full. The very first mail train, with which I managed to get into Skole thanks to my military credentials, came in only yesterday with only two cars.

....

Every apartment in Skole was seized by the military, and I only got accommodation after a long search, a lot of straw in an attic. The price is four crowns a day. I lived here until familiar officers moved into Groedel Castle, half of which was also burned by the Russians. Valuable furniture was burned there. The Russians also burned Groedel's farm at the far end of town. No other buildings were damaged. Here, too, they acted according to the known method: money, food, and valuables were taken from the population, and the furniture in the abandoned apartments was destroyed. In general, they did no harm to human life, it was only said in Kisszolyva that they took the able-bodied young men from there by conscripting them into the Russian army.

A terrible, desperate battle is going on around the city. The cannon fire is non-stop. Today is the first nice weather after the foggy autumn days. At seven o'clock in the evening, part of the artillery comes down from the mountain. He brings two hundred

prisoners, including two centurions and two machine guns. An artillery officer says that the right wing of the Russians has retreated.

An excerpt from a June 1920 article:

An episode from the Russian rule in Galicia.

— From a correspondent sent by Szamos. —

Skole, jun. 20. [1915]

In the first days of November last year, I left Skolé, this typically Galician small town, in front of which the valiant troops of Lt. General Péter Hoffmann still fought valiantly against the Russian troops constantly pouring in from Stryj on the Komarnicki hill. At that time, the Russians who were there hardly caused any damage to the small village. It was only in the huge Groedel Castle that the expensive furniture was brought together, doused with kerosene and set on fire, which then burned down half of the castle. Since then, Skole has been moaning again for a few months under Russian rule, and the usual traces of this rule are clearly visible: burnt houses, broken windows, apartments converted into stables, torn shutters of closed shops. The fighting itself did no damage to the city. When the Russians came in after our retreat, a line of our armor was still firing frequently at the Russian positions, and even our artillery was set up on the hill above the Groedel Castle, but ours were careful not to damage the city.

...

The workers of the [Groedel] factory begged the Cossacks not to burn down the factory, but the Cossacks chased them away with bayonets, they did not allow anyone to fire and they said that this was just the beginning. Those who come after us will set the whole city on fire. However, there was no time for that. The retreat was so rapid, frantic, and disorderly that the Russians could not finish their work of destruction. They had time, however, to burn Groedel's huge sawmill, which was completely destroyed, as well as the soda and candle factory and the makeshift stalls they had built of planks for their horses. The damage caused by the Russians with their arson runs into millions. At four o'clock in the morning on May 14, the first German-Ukrainian team came to Skolé, and our brave teams have been chasing the Russians non-stop ever since.

In fact, the amount of destruction that the Russians did in the city shows that they were already aware that they would not come back. During the first invasion, they

did not set fire or destroy. It is interesting that the Russian army withdrew from the territory of Galicia without conquering it: a whole army of Ruthenian women, all of them notoriously infamous, followed them. Today, even Skole is only a temporary replica of the military. It shows that he is already well behind the battlefield. In front of the Etappenkommando, civilians and soldiers read the posted reports of the German headquarters and Lt. General Hofer and spread with joy the news, which the officers coming from the battlefield tell, that the Russians have also begun a complete and urgent retreat on the Stryj line. That they suffered a lot of losses in the battles around Skole is shown by hundreds of white wooden crosses around the church and in the cemetery.

Sándor Dénes.

An excerpt from a 1928 article in Groedel's monthly Skole Polish-language newspaper regarding its history, recalled some details on its reconstruction after the devastation:

BIWEEKLY
GROEDEL BROTHERS
Industrial Plant
Editorial Office Administration

Nr. 8, Year 1

Skole Demnia Wyzna

Saturday, September 22, 1928

In 1915, retreating Russian troops started a fire in the sawmill, which destroyed both the industrial plant and the entire stock of wood stored in the warehouses.

The initiative of the owners, the Groedlow barons, did not yield to this blow. Despite difficult economic conditions (in the second year of the war), they undertook the difficult task of rebuilding the destroyed workshop with a huge investment of energy and capital and achieved a beautiful result.

The gradual reconstruction of the sawmill lasted two years, until a new one was built in place of the old one, more adapted to the latest technological advances.

Over the next few years, the sawmill and auxiliary plants were gradually updated, the tracks and depots were expanded, numerous improvements were made in the workshops, and a new box board production department was launched. Currently, a new spacious machine hall and boiler room are being finished, which will house powerful boilers that will operate a 1,200 HP steam engine.

The sawmill area covers an area of approximately 28 acres and is bordered on the southern and western sides by its own forests (about 60,000 acres), on the eastern side by the Opor River separating it from its own forests, and from the north by the town and the Skole station.

The transport is therefore very convenient and the appropriate amount of raw material is secured.

In a long line, forest railway wagons loaded with logs from the district gates roll through the southern gate. From the northern side of the railway to the 3-kilometer premyst track, entire trains with cargo picked up at various railway depots and all these wagons empty all their contents on the depots in front of the edger.

Besides the physical destruction of sawmills and other facilities during the war, due to the lack of labor - without Russian and Italian prisoners of war - the trea-

sury forestry farms and the various sawmills would become inoperable. Prisoners worked in almost every field of work, including logging, harvesting hay, repairing railroad tracks, hauling, and sawing. Additionally, training in forestry vocations essentially stopped, leaving a gap in the education of future forestry workers, such as engineers, rangers and foresters. There were four forestry vocational schools in Hungary prior to the Treaty of Trianon, and all four came under foreign occupation, with three of them falling into the breakaway areas.

Following the cessation of hostilities, it took approximately three years for both the Groedels and the town to rebuild. Lumber production resumed, and efforts were made to restore the Groedel mansion. During this restoration, various design alterations were implemented, notably involving what seems to be a new roof, which was subsequently reconstructed a second time not long after.

In Figure 66, it appears that an initial attempt was made to recreate the roof in a manner resembling the original design, with only minor divergences. However, this was later revised, leading to the replacement of the entire roof structure we observe in Figure 67. This revised roof featured a single central peak. The exact year of the earlier photograph remains unknown but is likely to fall between 1918 and 1925. The image shows a visibly cleaned-up facade, with the entire roof being reconstructed to include a central dome or ornamental cap and various cupolas, which were eventually eliminated in the final construction. The grounds also seem to be in a state of development, appearing rather muddy in the grainy picture.

Figure 66. Groedel Mansion under reconstruction

The final reconstruction was simplified by removing several decorative and functional elements: the balusters were removed along the perimeter, and the attic floors with a flattened dome on an octagonal drum were dismantled that were crowning the bay windows on both sides of the mansion. The upper floor bays or bump-outs were also removed, flattening the facade and roofline. The shape of the pediment of the main entrance changed: from a triangular one it became arched. Above it was erected a dome in the form of a truncated octagonal pyramid, the four edges of the base of which were smaller than the others (Figure 68.).

Figure 67. Groedel Mansion - 1930

Figure 68. Groedel Mansion side View

Throughout this period, Hermann, Bernhard, and their respective families primarily resided in Budapest, residing in adjacent homes on Lendvay ut. Additionally, Bernhard occasionally spent time in Kommando and Vienna, and Hermann had a presence in Bucharest. Meanwhile, Albert and his family made their home in Vienna, where they managed their business interests. The brothers typically journeyed to Skole for holidays and vacations. Richard and his wife, Valerie, were the exception, as they predominantly stayed in Skole throughout the year.

With the war over, the company began to generate a substantial income, doubling its earnings annually. With the assistance of a government loan, the sawmill in Groedlow underwent a comprehensive renovation and modernization. It was outfitted with ten high-speed gang saws, along with several auxiliary machines, primarily sourced from Sweden. In 1928, a distinctive power plant, valued at approximately one million zloty[63], was installed. This power plant featured a 1200hp steam engine and a 1000kw generator. The latter, in conjunction with the 150hp turbine plant in nearby Pohorylec, was utilized for the generation and conversion of electric power for technical purposes and illumination within the Groedlow colony.

A specialized cross-cut saw prepared the logs for cutting, and the facility included two extensive storage areas for both logs and sawn timber, covering a total area of 3km and housing various types of timber stacks. A newly constructed section efficiently manufactured timber crates, making use of small timber pieces and offcuts. The Director of the Groedlow plants was the renowned timber expert, Geza Roboz. Furthermore, between 1928 and 1930, the business published the newspaper "Wiadomośći Demnyańskie,[64]" addressing topics related to the economy, history, geography, and the region's way of life (please refer to the Appendix for the first two issues in Polish with translations).

In the years between the two world wars, the impeccably restored Groedel Mansion exuded an aura of opulence and prosperity, serving as a vibrant hub for the world's upper class, including members of international high society and aristocracy. Among the distinguished guests were Prince Alfons de Bourbon and numerous aristocrats hailing from Germany, Austria, Italy, England, Poland, and the Netherlands. The mansion played host to princes, barons, counts, politicians, and military figures who frequented the estate. These notable visitors partook in meticulously organized hunts, obtaining prized trophies, notably deer antlers, which they proudly displayed in their collections and celebrated their victories at esteemed European exhibitions.

In the **Demnianski Weekly (Nr. 10 pg 3 (no date))**

The GROEDEL Brothers Industrial Plant in Skole (Matopolska) publishes, in its

[63] *1 million Polish zlotys in 1928 ≈ $3.6 million in 2025 USD.*

[64] *News from Demnia*

own circulation and at its own expense, a periodical magazine entitled "Demnianski Głosodnik of the Groedel Brothers Industrial Plant", intended for the use of employees employed in these huge industrial plants, processing wood obtained from forests of the Skolsk Key, owned by the Groedlow barons, as well as wood purchased for industrial processing from state and private forests.

The articles by Baron Ryszard (Richard) Groedel and his collaborators, who sign with the pseudonym "lag" and "fr", deserve special recognition.

This magazine, which owes its creation and existence primarily to Baron Ryszard Groedl, who spared neither costs nor effort, because he not only bears all the costs associated with publishing, but also covered them to a large extent with his own purposeful articles, can be a model and an example worth imitating all larger industrial plants in Poland, because it can not only have an educational impact on employees, but also contribute significantly to improving relations between the employer and employees.

Skole Hunting Grounds

The deer rut is the crown of hunting. The Carpathian Forest seems to be an enchanted land from a fairy tale, where all seasons delight us with their pristine beauty: next to the winter white snow - the gold of autumn beeches, next to the summer garnet of blooming gentians - the bright spring green of Polonina grass...

Thanks to the great hospitality of the Groedl barons, in 1926 I was able to see these wonders and obtain a piece of fir in the wild Carpathian Forest, in the heart of the Skolszczyzna region.

How fervently I prayed in Lviv for the grace of Saint Hubert!

On September 21, I arrived in Skole, and from there I drove by car to Demnia Wyzna, the seat of the Groedl barons.

The next day, accompanied by two gamekeepers, I went hunting.

All around, the mountains are foggy, covered with towering spruces, a smoking cloud of billowing clouds and mist creeping on the streams. On the dark banks, descending towards the water, the black-green Opir [river] tears ahead.

We enter the forest. -

The towering trees obscures the sky. We are surrounded by green twilight. Somewhere below, a stream roars. The forest stream whispers and rustles over the stones, slithers like a silver snake under rotten logs, under the roots of trees, glides over the stones, dives into the dense thicket, falls with a silver rain from the fluffy moss...

We go up a serpentine road, then along a scree track. The fine debris of stones flying down is removed from under your feet. We pass a low coniferous forest at the bottom, dead, ruddy, with green living crowns, gathered in an impenetrable thicket of spruces, firs and limbs.

We pass leafy, gilded groves of hazel and beech trees, full of lush vegetation, huge feathery ferns, dark blue bunches of gentian, blackberries, raspberries and bright green Połonińska grass.

We descend from them into the darkness of the fir forest. The sky is once again obscured by spruces, firs, beeches and huge sycamore trees. Malachite columns of fallen trees are piled up around the circle. We are entering a wild land, the dangerously beautiful Carpathian Forest.

Under the roots of a forest giant torn from the heart of the earth, in a clay, muddy pit, the forester shows me a deer's "bath." The monstrous upheaval seemed to hang in the air, above a dark abyss, and at any moment it would fall down a steep slope into it.

In the early evening, in a wild fir forest, by a stream leading into the abyss, for the first time I hear, like a faint thunder, the roar of a deer, somewhere near Zełemyn:

A-uu... a-uu...

He is answered by another bull's challenge, a long one: ö—yyy, ö—yyy...

And the thundering duotone of the mountains continues. There are thunders of moans, threats, declarations of love and battle challenges...

(Source: Moje Przygody Łowieckie [My Hunting Adventures] by Juljan Ejsmond 1929, pgs 163-164)

The Groedels cared not only about business but also about leisure, with Baron Richard leading the way for at least 20 years before Hermann died in 1930. He took advantage of the fact that most of his family's lands, about 90%, consisted of forested mountains, glades, hollows, and ravines where mountain rivers and springs flowed and where countless game lived, especially roe deer, hares, wild boars, wolves, lynx and bears. This made the Skole region a hunting paradise.

In the Galician part of the Carpathians, in general, and Skole forests in particular, until 1880, deer was a rare species. After the appearance of the first large sawmills and industrial timber harvesting, the log cabins the Groedels had built were covered with lush Carpathian grasses and overgrown with blackberries and raspberries. Deer from Hungary came to such places. "Skole," added Alfred Mniszek, writer, chronicler, and longtime editor of "Hunter" – *"was, is and will remain the purest pearl among our Carpathian hunting areas."*

The deer population in the Skole region grew every year, except for the period of 1906-1907, when a severe winter caused significant damage to the deer population: about 1,000 roe deer died from starvation and cold. In the following years, the deer population began to grow rapidly. Before the First World War, there were about 550 deer bulls in the vicinity of Skole.

With the beginning of the war and during the four years of 1914-1918, the warring armies were stationed along all the Carpathians. The constant movement of troops, artillery shelling, and the continuous shooting of the territory from

Figure 69.

[Wiener Salonblatt, November 23, 1930)

Baron Richard Groedel shot this big odd eighteen pointer on the Skole estate.

the air frightened the deer. In addition to civilian poaching in the area, military poaching caused the greatest damage to the deer population.

After the end of the war, protection of the remaining animals was introduced in the Skole districts. Baron Richard spent money lavishly feeding the animals. Thanks to this and rational hunting management, which Richard had introduced ten years earlier, together with the manager of the estates, Geza Roboz, the chief of forestry, Mr. Jurecek, the chief forester, engineer Juliusz Miziołek and hunters, the deer population was restored. In 1932, the number of roe deer and deer reached more than 3,000, of which 300 were mature males. In addition, the efforts made by Richard to restore the fauna of the Skole region were connected with the love of mountain nature and the desire to bring it closer to the heyday of the pre-war state.

Additionally, the estate hosted educational programs on forestry, one being an annual visit by the University of Lemberg. During one particular visit in 1929, Baron Richard lectured on the subject: "Working methods, and the exploitation of forests, and the management of the timber industry in the United States of America and Sweden." Richard had visited the US in 1922 and traveled extensively around the country, visiting numerous timber companies to investigate methods and machinery used in lumber production. He and his entourage visited locations in the Pacific Northwest such as Seattle, Olympia, and Portland.

Figure 70.

[Wiener Salonblatt, December 8, 1928]

From the deer rut in Skole (Poland):
(l-r) Baron Richard Groedel, Geza Roboz, Baroness Christa Groedel, Countess Vera Münster, with Barons Han and Viktor Groedel. From the society journal

Figure 71.
Roe deer Trophies

Figure 72.
Baron Viktor Koenigswarter

Hunting was the passion of the men of the Groedel family. The first selective deer hunting began sometime in 1902. After 1914, the annual shooting in Rykovysk amounted to 25 individuals. In the Skole estates, the Rykovysk started around September 15 and lasted until September 30. An entire forest area was set aside for hunting, divided into six districts (plots). In each district, a corresponding hut with a kitchen, a toilet, and a cellar was built to store the hunted animals and products in the summer. The approach of the beast to the huts was heard from all sides. This was facilitated by a specially designed alarm system built into the walls of the huts. The coordination of

Figure 73. Fox hunt

Figure 74.
Scoring a Roe deer

the hunt, the course and the transmission of messages between the districts took place with the help of a corded telephone. Among the hunting districts, Butivlya took first place, followed by Guta Korostivska, Korostiv, Skole, Hrebeniv, Tukhlia, Lybohora and Rozhanka. Before and after the hunt, hunters gathered in a specially built hunting lodge "Conversation." A cellar was built nearby, which housed beer kegs. There was a telephone connection between individual hunting stands and hunting lodges. They went hunting with hunting dogs to the sound of a horn. Some hunted near the Opir River, others near the Demnei, in the mountains. A system of paths, sometimes carved into the rocks, was developed for the animal detachment. This allowed even elderly hunters to take part in the hunt. After the hunt, the hunters carried the prey to the hunting lodges. Hunters took horns, heads of wild boars, deer, and roe deer to make stuffed animals for their salons. Meat was sold to workers for a nominal fee.

Figure 75.
The art of a hunter

Zdobycie wieńców jelenich, nie należy do spraw łatwych. Tu trzeba być nietylko strzelcem, lecz przedewszystkiem myśliwym w pełnem znaczeniu tego słowa, bez względu na to, czy się poluje z zasiadki, czy na podchód lub podjazd, czy podchodem na tykowankę, czy też z nagonką lub psami, stojąc lub zabiegając stosownie do gonu psów na właściwym przesmyku. Sztuka myśliwego polega na tem, by umiał zwierzynę wyśledzić, podejść ją, a potem dopiero strzelić i to strzelić dobrze. Bardzo ciekawe jest właśnie ze względu na te umiejętności myśliwskie, polowanie na wabia, które wymaga poza wszystkiem jeszcze i muzykalności ucha i drugi rodzaj polowania przez t. zw. balansomanie. Poza tem trzeba jednak, by zdobyć tak cenne dla myśliwego trofea, jak wieniec jelenia, być fizycznie wytrzymałym i zdolnym do pokonywania przeszkód terenowych, wśród najrozmaitszych warunków atmosferycznych. Nie wszędzie i tylko w wyjątkowo dobrze i racjonalnie urządzonych rewirach łowieckich, jak np. w lasach barona Groedla w województwie stanisławowskiem są przygotowane dla myśliwych specjalne schroniska (zdjęcie na lewo), a jeszcze rzadziej napotkać można na kolejki, zresztą głównie dla kultury leśnej zbudowane (zdjęcie u góry), któremi mogą myśliwi podjechać do rewiru, by stamtąd dopiero zagłębić się w knieję i spotkać z jeleniem.

Translation: "Obtaining deer antlers is not an easy task. Here you have to be not only a guard, but above all a hunter in the full sense of the word, regardless of whether you hunt from a seat, or on a stalk or in the yard, or whether you stalk the rut or with a pack or dogs, standing or courting as appropriate. a chase of dogs on your passage. The art of a hunter is to be able to track down the game, approach it, and then shoot it, and shoot it well. It is very interesting, in terms of these hunting skills, hunting for decoys, which, apart from everything else, also requires a musical ear, and the second type of hunting, the so-called balancing act. In addition, to catch such a valuable trophy as a deer, you need to be physically strong and capable of overcoming terrain obstacles in a variety of weather conditions. Not everywhere, and only in exceptionally well and rationally organized hunting areas, such as, for example, in the forests of Baron Groedel in the Stanisławów Voivodeship, there are special shelters for hunters (see the road on the left), and even more rarely do you encounter long queues, and mainly for

culture. There are special forest huts built (photo at the top), through which hunters can drive to the area, and then go deeper into the forest and meet the deer."

The hunts, organized by Baron Richard, were a unique hunting holiday, with a characteristic hunting atmosphere, a large number of game, and exceptional company. The guests of the barons were persons of the European royal families of Spain — the pretender to the Spanish throne Alfonso Carlos, the Spanish Duke of San Jaime (Alfonso Carlos de Borbón), the claimant to the Portuguese throne, the only son of King Miguel I and Princess Adelaide Löwenstein and his cousin, the seventeenth Duke of Alba don Jacobo Fitz-James Stewart and Falco of Spain, Prince Hans Ferdinand von Löwenstein zu Löwenstein, the German prince Augustus of Saxony-Coburg-Gotha (Gusen), Augustvo. Prince Otto zu Windisch-Graetz who was married to Archduchess Elizabeth Maria of Austria (granddaughter of Emperor Franz Joseph I), prince Don Donato Elim Pavlovich Demidov, who was known to have shot as many as 9 deer, prince Löwenstein, mister Littlendale from London, count Ciarciani from the Italian city of Trento, prince Alba from Spain and his brother Don Miguel Braganza, prince of Wirtenberg, Baron Georg von Ullmann, Count Johann Paul Limburg-Stirum van Limburg Stirum, son-in-law of Baron Hermann Groedel - Baron Viktor Koenigswarter, as well as German, Austrian, Italian, English, Dutch, Polish aristocrats: princes barons, counts, military, and politicians. Among the regular guests was Julian Eismond, a Polish poet, prose writer and naturalist whose report about one of his hunts is noted at the beginning of this section. Hunting trophies obtained during the hunt, especially deer antlers, became the pride of the collection of famous guests, as well as the decoration of relevant exhibitions, glorifying Skole in the world.

Figure 76.
Return from hunting on narrow-gauge railway - 1937

Figure 77.
Ready for the hunt

The Groedels were characterized by a special hospitality, especially from Baron Richard. Guests who came to Demnya stayed for free in the baron's mansion in specially adapted comfortable rooms. At their disposal were care services, food, the mansion library, entertainment: symphony concerts, theater performances, and film screenings.

During the demonstration hunts, a celebration was held at the Casino, where the Groedel's orchestra, under the direction of I. Bandurovych demonstrated "hunting signals" and its wide repertoire.

The Groedels demonstrated their achievements in the restored and preserved fables of the Skole region at hunting exhibitions. The first International Hunting Exhibition took place in Vienna under the patronage of Emperor Franz Joseph I

in 1910. As an avid hunter, the emperor visited the exhibition six times. Hunting trophies were presented from the Skole estate: large lynx skins and spread deer antlers. The horn crown, awarded in Berlin in 1909, is a pair of two deer antlers that died without being able to disperse. The exhibits received enthusiastic approval from visitors. On the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the Małopolska Hunting Society, a hunting exhibition was held in Lviv in 1936. From Skolivshchyna, the Groedels presented a stand with the following rare species of local fauna: black wolf, lynx, and raccoon dog. The Carpathian diversity was demonstrated with a large number of deer antlers, deer saber dumps, wild boar fangs, skins and stuffed animals. On a special illuminated tablet there was a map with the image of all districts with hunting huts and beautiful landscapes.

Appreciating the natural resources of the region, the Groedels became the initiators of tourism development. The narrow-gauge railway was used not only for the transportation of timber, it also transported hunters to hunting grounds, and railway trips were arranged for tourists. In addition to admiring the Carpathian landscapes, swimming in the Opir River, in Skole and its environs, travelers could recuperate with the mineral waters of five springs: in the valley of Pavlovy Potok there were two springs, "hydrogen sulfide" and "iron water"; another "hydrogen sulfide" - near the railway station; Albert's source - on the way to the tract Svyatoslav and one in the floodplain of the river on Hill street in the town of Skole. In the village, the barons established a fishing farm to grow trout and crayfish.

All this contributed to the intensive development of tourism.

Figure 78. Groedel Trophies - European Exhibition of 1921

Figure 79.

Groedel Family and Others – Skole ca. 1930.

(L-R) Unk man, Richard, Valerie, Unk man, Unk man, unk woman, Geza Roboz, unk man

Figure 80.

Prince Otto zu Windisch-Graetz[65] (center)

(married to the granddaughter of Emperor & King Franz Josef I),

Geza Roboz (right), man on left unknown

The Groedels Built a Resort

Skole had long been famous for its picturesque terrain, temperate climate and healing springs. However, these resort opportunities went unused until the end of the 19th century due to poor road conditions and little service sector development. The Groedels were among the first to invest in the region's infrastructure to receive famous European aristocrats and business associates and to develop the tourism business.

After the family invested in the infrastructure, wealthy vacationers came more frequently to use the region's spas for recovery. The area had become inviting to travelers to and from Austria-Hungary. In addition to walking in the Carpathian plains and swimming in the Opir River in Skole and the surrounding area, travelers could recuperate with mineral waters from five healing springs.

By the 1930s. thanks to Skole's well-developed infrastructure led by the Groedels, boarding houses, holiday villas, a cinema, well-kept beaches over the Opir River, a ski jump, a hockey field, an ice rink and the first toboggan run in the Carpathians were functioning. They also supported a football (soccer) team of 15 men. Their shirts depicted three spruces in honor of the Groedel's heraldry (coat of arms).

[65] *An Austrian nobleman, who became known through his marriage to Archduchess Elisabeth Marie of Austria, the so-called "Red Archduchess".*

Figure 81.
Narrow gauge train passenger car

Figure 82.
Example of a forest railway carriage in a nearby town

Figure 83.
Bazar Grodzeliv on Sapighy, 34, Lviv

In summer, the resort was visited by more than 1,500 people, mostly wealthy. Before the Second World War (1937), the resorts of the Skole region (then part of Poland) were included in the list of mountain settlements that deserved protection as a recreational area.

At the end of the 19th century, the narrow-gauge railway to the neighboring village of Korchyn, built at the Groedel's expense, made tourist trips possible around the picturesque area and walks to two balneological (spa) establishments - Austeria and Kovalshchyna. In the same area, a narrow-gauge route was laid from Demni to the village of Tysovets (18.5 km long), which transported travelers to the highest mountain of the Skole Beskids - Parashka (1270 m) and was very popular with vacationers.

Translation: "A characteristic and quite common sight from the Nadwórna area - forest railway carriages. There are two wagons in this train to transport tourists. The first carriage from the left was occupied by Jews (all dressed similarly, with beards and sidelocks). The second wagon is "occupied" by the Dziwinski family...

In addition to Skole, the Groedels owned a small piece of property in Lviv 67 km (109 miles) north of Skole. Before the First World War, the prominent Polish architect Roman Felinski, built a shopping center - Bazar Grodzeliv on the street Sapighy, 34 (now Bandera Street) for Hermann (Figure 83.). The building contained general stores, a coffee shop and a cinema. Only archival materials, plans and a few photographs remain. It was destroyed during the bombing of Lviv in the first days of World War II. The ruins were dismantled, and a square and a playground were laid on the site after the war. In Lviv, the Groedel brothers (or possibly Herman alone), owned a house on the street. Gorodotsky 109.

South of Skole lay the village of Grebeniv, long known for its therapeutic iron-iodine and bromine-salt springs. With the help of a narrow-gauge railway built by the Groedel family, the Shmater brothers developed the Zelemyanka resort area. They opened the "Shmaterivka" sanatorium in 1906, which by 1912 hosted roughly 200 guests. In the early 20th century, the village flourished with elegant cottages that welcomed over 2,500 seasonal visitors. The surroundings featured cultivated forests, scenic walking paths, well-maintained beaches, and more. The Groedels also

established a fishery there for raising trout and crayfish, supplying markets across the empire. But its success was short-lived.

By the close of World War II, the Groedel estate had vanished. In the autumn of 1939, Soviet authorities seized the property and nationalized it. Around 200 Groedel-employed engineers and craftsmen were forcibly deported to Siberia for logging. The war devastated the region—destroying factories, roads, the railway network, housing, and even the hospital.

Under Soviet rule, Skole's economy grew only marginally. Small-scale gas extraction, inefficient state farms, and timber work supported a modest population and minor industry. But Skole and its surrounding district never regained the prosperity they once knew. Its once-thriving spas disappeared.

While the Groedels' ventures were tied to extractive colonial economics and the use of both natural and human resources, their enterprises also brought substantial progress to the region during the late 1800s and early 1900s:

Forest resources were logged systematically, unlike the uncontrolled felling seen elsewhere in the Carpathians. Reforestation was implemented with scientific care.

The Groedels' era paralleled a time of rapid modernization—railways, industry, electrical systems, and telephone lines transformed the area.

Their investments also stimulated the growth of nearby health resorts, boosting both the economy and the region's cultural and social life.

Thanks to their foresight and ambition, the Groedels turned Skole into a renowned destination for Europe's elite hunters and gave it a level of prestige it had never known.

Once Again, War

In September 1939, when Skole was annexed to the Soviet Union and the town found itself once again under Russian/Soviet occupation, commercial and community life were brought to an end, as well as Groedlowo.

Hungarian troops allied with the Third Reich entered Skole in July 1941, and a month later the Germans seized the town. Shortly afterward, the Jewish Council (Judenrat) was formed, which was an association representing a Jewish community, especially in German-occupied territory, during World War II. It served to meet the demands of the occupier. One of its tasks was to provide Germans with men between 14 and 60 to perform forced labor.

In December, 20 Jewish sawmill workers were declared unfit for work and murdered in a forest. This was the first signal of the new anti-Jewish order. Less than a year later, in September 1942, German authorities issued an order according to which Jews from the whole district were to be concentrated in several locations before the end of October: Stryj, Bolechów (Bolekhiv), Chodorów (Khodoriv), Skole, and Żurawno (Zhuravne). In 1938 there were 2,670 Jews in Skole. In September 1942 most of the Jews were in labor camps. On 2-4 December 1942, a "liquidation Aktion" was carried out, during which about 100 disabled Jews were killed in the town, and those who were considered "unproductive" were sent to Stryj and from there to the death camp in Bełżec. Most of the 900 remaining in Skole were transferred to two labor camps liquidated in June and August 1943. During this period, the Groedels were scattered living in Budapest, Vienna or Kommando, as well as several other countries such as Czechoslovakia, Turkey, Australia and the United States.

After the occupation of Skole by Soviet troops in late September 1939, Baron Richard, together with the Skole administrators, the manager of the estate Geza Roboz and the gardener Karol Sidlecki, left for Vienna, at which time the Groedel's property was expropriated and nationalized by the Soviet authorities, beginning the estate's long downward spiral to the neglected and deteriorated condition it is in today (2024), although it is currently undergoing renovation, even during Ukraine's war with Russia.

The family's mansion housed the Soviet NKVD (People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs) unit from 1939 to July 1941 after which the Hungarian army and later German Gestapo occupied the town. In September, 1942, most of the Jews

were sent to labor camps, while the remaining Jews were executed in June and August of 1943. The Soviets returned in August 1944 and operated until 1948. While the NKVD occupied the mansion, published accounts by former prisoners tell of torture while imprisoned there. For example:

Date: Uncertain66

ALEKSANDER SKARZYŃSKI

[1.] Rank, name, and surname:

Master Corporal, Aleksander Skarzyński.

[2.] Circumstances of arrest:

I was arrested by the Soviet border guard when crossing the Hungarian border, close to Ławoczne [today in Ukraine].

[3.] Methods of examining and torturing the arrested during interrogation:

In Skole, in the Groedel mansion, and in Kharkov, they forced me to testify by beating [me] and offering me cooperation with the NKVD, and the same [went] for other prisoners.

During the German occupation, the mansion housed the command of the 17th Wehrmacht Army.

In 1948 under Soviet rule, the mansion was transferred to a boarding school for homeless children. From 1956 until about 2020, orphans, semi-orphans, as well as those children in whose villages there is no school, studied there. Within a year after the Russian war with Ukraine ("Putin's war") began in 2022, the mansion became a hospital for the wounded.

[66] *https://tinyurl.com/2tmb2fr7*

Figure 84.
Groedel castle with a statue of Lenin.

Figure 85.
Groedel Castle 2018

Correspondence

In 1980, one of the sales executives of a lumber distributor for the Groedel Brothers, Harry Winkler of Ernst Seidelmann Corporation (Harry is the father of the actor Henry Winkler), sent a letter to Sarah Knebel[67] of Sydney, Australia, recounting his time with the Groedels, which is reprinted below:

Mrs. Sarah Knebel

Knebel Kitchens

14 Baker Street

East Botany, N.S.W, 2019 Australia

Dear Mrs. Knebel:

Let me begin with the usual "what a small world this is". To think that in this big world of ours, you coincidentally met my son, Henry Winkler, somewhere in Australia, and that through this meeting we have orbited into a big wide circle which has brought us back to the "good old days" of BARON VON GROEDEL CONCERN.

As you might have heard, my wife, Ilsa and myself had spent a great deal of time at the different tremendous Timberland Estates of this concern, which boasted the largest production centers in the Carpathian Mountains of Hungary, Poland and Romania where Mrs. Winkler and myself enjoyed unforgettable times at the beautiful Castles of the Baron Von Groedel which consisted of 26 to 40 rooms, where we lived like Queens and Kings.

The Groedel Concern, was "once upon a time", the largest private forest owner and timber producer in the whole world, with its huge timberlands and sawmills in the different Eastern countries of Europe. This Concern owned their own lumber carrying steamers under the name, "GROEDEL LINE". They carried our lumber products from the Black Sea Ports of Romania, like Constanza, Braila, etc. and also from the North Atlantic Ports of Danzig to almost all corners of the world.

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[67]*Sarah claimed to be a daughter of Baron Richard (extramarital), but no vital records have been found confirming her relationship. Her son, Richard Knebel, once owned a business in Sydney called "Groedel Kitchens." I have met and stayed in touch with Richard and his family over the years but have uncovered no documentary evidence of the relationship. Richard was not interested in taking a DNA test, but his daughter, Rachel, did. The results were negative for a blood relationship with the Groedel family.*

Our sales offices were in Bucuresti, Vienna, Budapest, Berlin and Amsterdam and I can only compare this company to Weyerhaeuser and Georgia Pacific in the U.S.A. I am telling you all this in order to give you a better picture of the huge size of the Groedel Concern, which has now "gone down the drain", "tempi passati", and enterprises like this one, practically do not exist anymore.

I hope that the short history I presented will give you a better idea of the significance of what was once the world-wide and renown, "GROEDEL CONCERN".

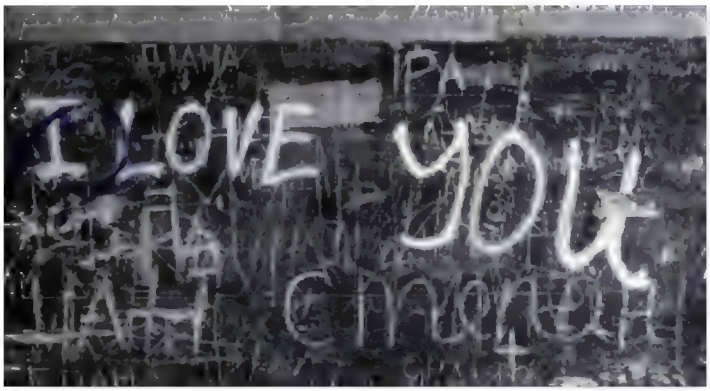
Facebook Posting by Irina Leimbacher[68]

February 14/15, 2022

An anonymous valentine for all who see it! But who is the deictic YOU?? I will never know what kid wrote this and whom they were longing for or (secretly? overtly?) addressing. Or whether they were just practicing their English and throwing this proclamation out to the world-at-large! This is among the graffiti in the former horse-carriage entrance to an estate once owned by a great-grandfather I never met. The house was built in Austro-Hungary; - subsequently it became Poland, Ukraine, Nazi-occupied territory, Poland again, USSR, and then Ukraine once again. One of my relatives was (I heard) paraded through the streets in a cart for having been a capitalist or a Jew (I think at that moment it was because he was a capitalist landowner), others ran away, some eventually hauled off to camps, others survived as unsuccessful gamblers (?). My mother was here in 1939 on a family visit as the Germans were invading Poland. Afterwards it became a site of occupation by various administrations, including functioning as an NKVD (pre-KGB) interrogation site, then an orphanage with a Lenin museum (they all had them I was told), a boarding school, and, when I visited 4 years ago, a downtrodden building housing some admin offices from the school and a lovely family of refugees from Eastern Ukraine (Donetsk region). Then, there were plans (or rhetoric) to make it into a tourist center that might revitalize the town. I wanted to make a film about it, but it all got too complex for my limited skills... and very hard to get any "history" of these traumatic periods in small town Ukraine. I went to city hall and tried to talk to the Mayor - they told me he had just been fired and there was no one to talk to. I got screamed at by someone's daughter after she told me they

[68]*Irina is a great-granddaughter of the baron and baroness Groedel*

hid a family member of mine. And the head of the school didn't want me to go near the house/ school building because I would create a disturbance... But the "I love you" remains, a trace of some boarding school passion or perhaps just ennui. I'm throwing it out there and back at the world on this V-day many years after its scribbling.



Miscellaneous Notes

Hermann Goering Visits Skole

Article: In the footsteps of Galician Jews

March 2017

Presentation of the publishing projects of the museum "Following the footsteps of Galician Jews." The reference to "Barons of Gredley" most likely included Richard and possibly Albert.

In the memorial book, which was carefully kept by the owner of the restaurant, in 1942 the police guard commander from Berlin Ger. R. Münchac. Despite the fact that Pan Edzio was a Jew, the German ordered him to arrange a reception with the Barons of Gredley in Skole, where Goering himself was supposed to arrive. Food and alcohol for 300 people were brought from Lviv. Edward Terlersky later said: "That son of a bitch ate like a cow in the stable, and if I knew then about him I would later learn about it, then I would pour poison to his croutons with bacon."

Youtube Video of Skole

This professionally created video provides an excellent history of the Skole estate. However, there are several factual errors, such as stating the myth that Albert won money in the casino that paid for the Skole estate. Evidence shows that Albert was in university in Germany at the time of the Skole acquisition, and was only 19 years old.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xnguvHwszB8

MÁRAMAROSSZIGET

Figure 86. Groedel villa, Máramarossziget, 2014

Máramarossziget (now Sighetu Marmației, Romania) was a significant early center for the Groedel family's business empire. The town, nestled in the historic region of Transylvania, played a vital role in their timber operations and served as the location of their first major residence after migrating from Germany.

The Groedel villa, built in 1887 by Hermann, was a testament to the family's wealth, influence, and dominance over the regional economy. The exact details of its construction remain uncertain, but accounts suggest that Hermann and his brother Bernhard originally built adjacent homes, with Hermann later incorporating them into a single grand estate. The villa's architecture and interior once reflected the prosperity of the Groedel family, though its later history under Communist rule and successive fires led to the loss of much of its character, including wrought iron gates, statues, water features, and fine furnishings.

Despite these losses, the villa's historical importance remains, having served multiple roles throughout its existence—from a family mansion to a military headquarters, and eventually a psychiatric hospital.

Máramarossziget was a place of both industrial progress and cultural significance. It was home to one of the largest Jewish communities in Hungary, producing notable figures such as Elie Wiesel, whose childhood home stood only a few blocks from the Groedel villa.

During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Máramarossziget was a bustling industrial town where the Groedels exerted substantial economic influence. The family's timber contract with the Hungarian Treasury fueled rapid industrialization. Their sawmills, located near the Tisza River, were described in 1876 as vast, modern facilities, producing lumber for export and domestic use—including the reconstruction of Szeged after the devastating flood of 1879.

The sawmill complex was a well-planned environment featuring residential quarters, decorative wooden pavilions, and even a collection of forestry maps and hydrological models. Visitors marveled at the craftsmanship of the wooden furniture, boats, and household items produced there, underscoring the high level of skill and organization within the Groedel enterprise.

Beyond timber, the Groedel family expanded into other ventures, such as the *Máramarossziget Lighting Joint Stock Company*, formed in 1894 to provide public lighting and electrical equipment for the town. This initiative highlights their role in modernizing the region.

The Groedels were also benefactors and key figures in the town's civic life. Their enterprises provided employment for thousands, fostering local economic stability. They were also deeply involved in philanthropy.

Following World War I, Máramarossziget became part of Romania under the Treaty of Trianon, altering the political and economic landscape. Despite their continued presence, the Groedels' influence in the region waned, especially as the company's holdings were restructured amid financial difficulties in the 1930s after Hermann's death.

The villa itself experienced a tumultuous history:

WWI: It served as the headquarters of the 7th German Army.

Post-WWII: It became associated with local folklore, featuring in literature such as "Water" by Alexandru Ivasyuk.

Communist Era: The property was nationalized and repurposed as a psychiatric hospital.

Late 20th Century: Two fires destroyed much of its original splendor, erasing many of its unique architectural and artistic features.

While the Groedels' impact on the town was primarily economic, their presence also shaped the broader urban development, from railway infrastructure to civic utilities. Their rise and eventual decline mirrored the shifting political and economic tides of Central Europe.

Figure 87.
Studio in Máramarossziget

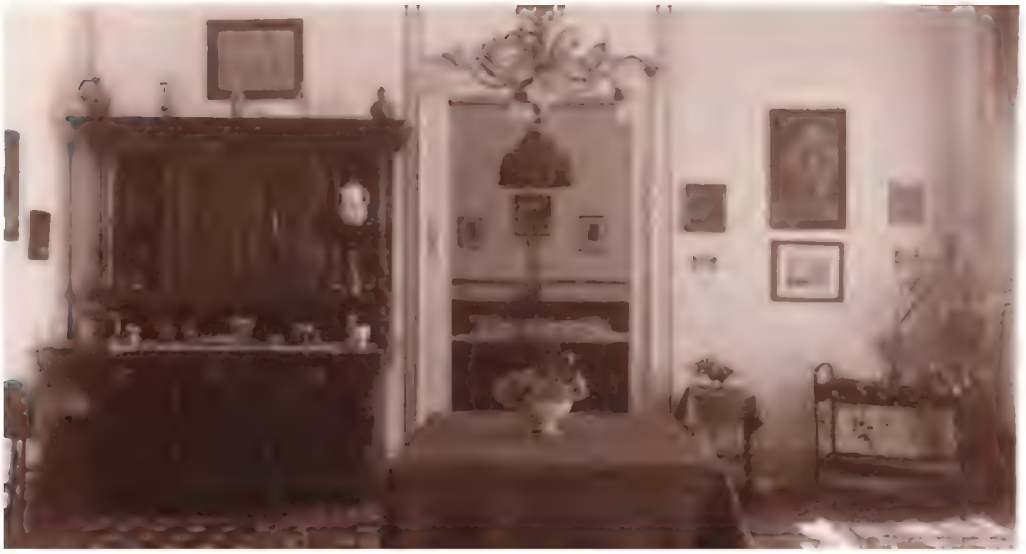


Figure 88.
Rooms in Máramarossziget

In August, 1876, only two years after the family won the contract with the Hungarian treasury, a group consisting of Hungarian doctors and naturalists traveled to Máramarossziget among other sites, and toured the Groedel factory. In their trip summary, they describe the factory and its surroundings.

Pesti Naplo, August 28, 1876

Toward noon, we had a common fork breakfast at the local treasury restaurant, and then we headed towards Sziget, so that in the afternoon we could see the magnificent treasury steam saw factory in Sziget-kamara.

This factory is located next to the national road, not far from the Tisza, and occupies a huge space. After terminating the fairly well-known Pollák contract, the Hungarian treasury signed a contract with the Bavarian timber trading company "Grödel brothers" last year, according to which it will process about one and a half million worth of wood for it every year. For the treasury, this contract also has the advantage that the named company cannot sell these wooden goods in Hungary. The treasury has a 7-frame steam saw factory in Bástyaháza, but this was not sufficient for the processing of the wooden goods stipulated in the contract, so last year they built the steam saw factory in Sziget-Kamara, which works exclusively for the "Grödel brothers".

The factory has been flagged up for days and under the expert leadership of forest councilor Nándor Bikkai and forester Imre Herzer, it is furnished as best as possible by the forestry department. Within the twelve frames of the great building of the steam sawmill, the knives can be placed at any distance from each other, depending on how wide the timber is to be cut. The steam engine located in the great engine room is heated with fallen sawdust. The carpentry workshop is located in the attic of the factory, and it will get bigger every year. In addition to the factory premises, there are some very pretty rooms, one of which contains the herbarium collection of Lajos Wagner, treasurer of forestry and a very famous herbalist, and the others contain forestry maps and various waterworks, including sluice gates, weirs, rakes, etc. it is occupied by very pretty wooden models. In the huge area around the factory, in addition to a large amount of wood stock, there are several supervisors' apartments and some very pretty wooden pavilions, which were decorated for this occasion by forester Gusztáv Sonntag with very pretty pictures. Very nice woodwork in the pretty pavilions, u. m. we saw boats, rowing poles, various household tools and dishes, and the beauty of the works convinced me that home industry could be made very profitable in Máramaros. Around the pavilions, giant pine trees are set up in the shape of a tent, and various

quality boards and wood materials are arranged in the most elegant way. We also saw very beautiful foamy furniture trees here, which can be said to be almost unique in their kind. In general, the forest industry in Máramaros is very developed, and only the demand should be greater to make it even more profitable. It can honestly be said that the guests of the assemblies, who had not known Máramaros until now, without exception admired the many different materials accumulated in this county and the industry here. God grant that this itinerant meeting will have the desired result, that they will try to influence the progress of this end region of our country by getting to know it more widely. Embrace its spas, its forest industry, visit its many picturesque places, then the "Hungarian Switzerland" will dawn on better days.

Figure 89.
Sawmill in Máramarossziget

Figure 90.
Jewish lumber workers in Máramarossziget ca.1930

The company created a public lighting company called "Máramarossziget Lighting Joint Stock Company."

This limited liability company was formed in accordance with the Articles of Association adopted by the constituent general meeting held on April 30, 1894.

Subject: Providing public lighting, providing equipment and related commercial and industrial company services in M.-Sziget. Duration: 52 years. Registered capital: 400,000 crowns, divided into 800 shares each for a demo of 500 crowns. Its decisions should be published in a local political newspaper. The members of the Board of Directors elected on April 30, 1894: Antal Szöllősy, Rezső Hubor, Ármin Groedel, Miksa Haasz and dr. Grünvald Zsigrmond.

Although Groedel's partner, Wilhelm Adam Schmidt, relocated to Máramarossziget before the family and ran the business from there, we don't know where he lived or his office location. Nor do we have information about the purchase or construction of the villa.

Accounts suggests that in 1887, Hermann and Bernhard purchased adjacent properties, each constructing a house. According to this version, Bernhard soon relocated to Kommando, leaving his property in Hermann's possession. It is further claimed that Hermann later connected the two houses with a large central section, as depicted in Figure 91. However, this story remains unverified and is most likely a myth. Notably, there is no mention of their father, Zadig, who continued to lead the business until his death in 1896. Furthermore, the Kommando property was not acquired until 1894—seven years after the supposed move—raising the question of where Bernhard and his family resided during that period. Furthermore, the birth of Bernhard and Gisela's daughter, Theodora, in Máramarossziget in 1893 suggests that the family was still living there at that time.

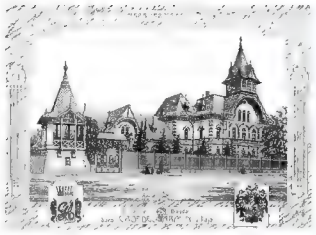
All of Hermann and Melanie's children were born in the villa in Máramarossziget. Unfortunately, only a few interior photographs survive, shown in Figures 87 and 88, and little is known about the family's daily life there. Today, the villa serves as a hospital for the mentally ill.

The following are a series of postcards depicting the Groedel villa over various timeframes.

Figure 91.
Groedel Villa, Máramarossziget

Conclusion

The Groedel villa in Máramarossziget was once a grand reflection of the Groedel's legacy, set against the backdrop of a thriving industrial town. Although time and history have eroded its grandeur, the town still bears traces of the family's former prominence. Their sawmills, lighting company, and economic ventures helped transform Máramarossziget into a regional hub of industry and innovation, leaving an indelible mark on its past.



KOMMANDO (COMANDĂU)

The heart beats warmly when you see a rare beautiful landscape, a new event, and your heroes. That's how I was in Kommando - in the realm of pine forests. Pine - a ubiquitous southern forest. Cone mountains and fairy-tale valleys lined with centuries-old pine forests. Green emerald landscape, strange world, so beautiful that at first glance one would not even believe. There is no more beautiful music than the music of the forest. You stop and listen to whisper, tease, or shout angrily from one mountain to another and the valley is serene, day and night, always. How wonderful, how dignified the pine! A romantic, proud beauty. This is Kommando. Anyone who has seen it once wants to come back here.

- Fazekas István, Előre, 1959

Figure 92. Groedel lodge in Kommando (2014)

The industrial estate in Gyulafalva is located in the southeastern Carpathians in Háromszék county. In an uninhabited region, this forest was untouched for centuries. Like a huge primeval forest, it catches your eye and fills you with amazement at the enormous power expressed in nature.

The primeval forest belonged to the treasures that nature jealously guarded from the destructive human force. Surrounded by mountains surrounded by impenetrable wild ravines, in valleys with a unique location, all roads and connections were completely absent.[69]

[69]*The foresters in Gyulafalva, Magyar Polgar Kolozsvar, Aug 28, 1898*

The acquisition and development of Kommando marked a turning point in the Groedel family's timber empire, elevating it into one of the largest and most sophisticated lumber operations in Europe. Situated in the rugged Háromszék Mountains of Transylvania, Kommando presented formidable challenges—harsh winters, difficult terrain, and logistical hurdles. Yet, through engineering innovation, strategic investment, and sheer determination, the Groedel family transformed this remote forested expanse into a hub of industrial progress. The establishment of ***Érdelyi Erdőipari Részvénytársaság*** (E.E.Rt.), or the ***Transylvanian Forest Industry Joint-Stock Company,*** cemented their dominance over the region's timber trade. Kommando's sawmills, narrow-gauge railway, and gravity-powered funicular system revolutionized the transport and processing of lumber, allowing the Groedels to supply timber not only across Austria-Hungary but also to international markets. The settlement that grew around the sawmills became a model of industrial efficiency, equipped with electric lighting before many major cities, and housing thousands of workers from diverse backgrounds. Kommando was not merely a business venture—it was a testament to the Groedel family's vision, engineering prowess, and ability to harness the vast natural resources of the Carpathians to fuel their empire.

Located in the Transylvania region of Romania, 8 miles south of Covasna in the Háromszék Mountains on a high plateau in the Nagy-Bászka valley at the confluence of the Kupán, Taplica and Rust rivers, Kommando is the highest settlement in Covasna County (Háromsék Megye) with an altitude of 3336 feet above sea level. It was one of the junctions of the narrow-gauge industrial railway built in the 1880s that branched out into every valley.

Five kilometers from today's Kommando, the first factory, the József steam saw, was built on Gyula Zathureczky's site right in the middle of the primeval forest.

1888. October. The timber workers stand on their pedestals, the steam engine resting like a mammoth. Beep. The silence of the forest splits in two. That old silence will never return to the mountains, the machines will rumble, winter and summer, day and night, and the factory will be buzzing every morning. On this notable October day, light flooded the factory, the log room, the plank, the small Swiss-style wooden houses of the officials. In Gyula, wrote Anna Lato, "man stole the heavenly light from God's hand."

- *Anna* Látó, "Zadik és utódai," Korunk 1976

The forest, the wood mass of which was initially purchased by David Horn from Gyula Zathureczky for 25 years of use, was spread over the territory of Hungary and Romania. It consisted of a total of 65,000 hectares, of which 22,000 hectares were in the territory of Olách, 2,765 hectares were from Hungarian forests that were transferred to Romania based on the Hungarian-Romanian border agreement of 1888, and 40,372 hectares were forests located in solely Hungarian territory.

Why was the Groedel family so invested in Kommando? There may have been a strategic reason behind Zadig's decision to send Bernhard there. Unlike David Horn, Zadig may have been aware that the Székler ring road was soon to be constructed and had even ensured that the railway line would be connected to Covásna, securing a critical transportation route for the business. The acquisition was financed through a loan from the Austrian Banking Union, allowing the company to expand its operations. With three sawmills—Gyulafalvi, Kommando, and the newly acquired Musai—in full production, maintaining a steady supply of timber was essential to keeping both the machinery and workforce operating at maximum capacity.

The plant was equipped with all the achievements of then-modern technology including three steam saws, one of which, the "Menalas saw," which was located on Romanian territory, however, the timber processed there was transported to Romania via Hungary in order to evade certain taxes. The plant employed 3,000 workers and transported about ten thousand rail wagonloads to the country and abroad every year. The company also produced finished wood products such as furniture and cellulose for clothing

Kommando History

At the end of the 19th century, almost two thirds of the area of Háromszék (Covasna) County was covered by forests.

Kommando is situated in the basin-like hollow of a valley at the confluence of the three brooks named Kupan, Toplica and Rozsdas, all of them rushing towards the valley of Nagy-Baszka. The village which is the highest-lying settlement (1071 m) of the historic Háromszék County and was originally founded at the meeting point of the snow-capped mountains of Háromszék as a simple military base. Later, it was used as a logging area and is constantly changing having become a recreation resort. On Romanian maps, Kommando is shown as "Comandău."

Commercial development of the area dates back to 1888 when a wooden railway for animal traction was built to Halom at the head of the Basca Mare valley from the Gyula sawmill. Sawn timber was taken out by cart until the railway opened the prospect of a much larger scale of production.

Kommando is a small, independent village whose name originates from the old border guards, as it once housed a border defense unit when the country's frontier lay there. Although the settlement is relatively young, its history stretches back centuries. In the 17th century, the area was a vast forest owned by the Mikes[70] family of Zagon, granted to them by the Hungarian king in recognition of their loyalty and service. After Pál Mikes, a supporter of Imre Tokoly, fought against the emperor's army, his fortune was confiscated, and the forest was divided. In 1764, a Szekler Border Guard Unit operated here until 1848, after which a Customs Unit replaced it in 1867. In 1882, Gyula Zathureczky, the forest's owner, sold the timber rights to David Horn, a businessman from Pest with roots in Felvidek, who began large-scale construction and founded the Transylvanian Wood Industry joint stock company.

The first lumberyard was named Gyulafalva after its owner, and within a few years, a second sawmill was established, marking the true beginning of Kommando. For the growing workforce, hut-like homes were built, initially accommodating forty families. By 1889, the village was home to people from nine different ethnic backgrounds. During David Horn's ownership, Kommando had three operating sawmills, a school, hospitals, and electric power in the lumberyards, while the streetlights in the nearby large city of Brasov were still gas-lit.

Alongside building factories, Horn envisioned a circular railway system and inclined planes in the mountains, beginning construction before financial difficulties forced him to sell the business. The railway system was completed ten years later; Horn built two inclined planes, and the Groedel family, the new owners, added two more. The inclined plane, a brilliant 19th-century engineering feat, was designed by engineer Lux Emil to transport wood from the forests. It operated solely by gravity, requiring no fuel. Of the original inclined planes, only the one on Sisak Mountain remains, a unique piece of European industrial history. Spanning 1,268 meters, it had two carts, with a 327-meter

[70] *Pronounced "Meekesh"*

difference between the highest and lowest points. Loaded carts used their own weight to pull empty carts up the parallel track, serving as the only connection to other settlements for years, transporting both wood and people during its 108 years of operation. This was the only transportation means for the people of Kommando until 1970, when the road between Covaszna and Kommando was finished.

After the secularization of monastic lands in 1863, the Romanian government became a major landowner and established a forest service in 1881. Due to a lack of resources to build its own transport infrastructure, the state often sold woodland at low prices. In 1888, the Transylvanian forestry company, co-owned by David Horn and his partner Mopurgo, began operations, involving woodworkers, laborers, and thousands of railway builders. The once sparsely inhabited region, home only to shepherds, foresters, hunters, and other forest dwellers, saw an unprecedented transformation, requiring the construction of forest roads, railways, ropeways, floating canals, as well as residential facilities and sawmills.

Horn's first wood processing plant, named Gyulafalva after the former landowner, featured a steam saw called József Saw, in honor of County Prefecture Chief József Potsa. In this previously uninhabited and untouched forest, the factory introduced electric lighting to Southeast Transylvania for the first time in 1888, lighting not only the plant and log room but also the residences of officials and workers. The plant was officially inaugurated on January 18, 1889, with County Prefecture Chief Potsa and Member of Parliament Béla Szentkereszty in attendance.

The sawmills operated almost continuously, with forests linked by railways and roundabouts. Workers, primarily Szeklers, Romanians, and Slovaks, were recruited from distant regions, settling in the surrounding towns and contributing to the area's development.

Three miles from Gyulafalva, in the spring of 1890, the second sawmill was built in Kommando, named Gábor Saw in honor of Baron Gábor Apor, a ministerial adviser. This marked the founding of the Kommando settlement as it exists today. At the same time, David Horn initiated the construction of narrow-gauge railway lines, a roundabout, and an "Inclined Plane" funicular system to transport wood down to Covasna and haul workers, equipment, and other supplies up the mountains. The two funicular platforms operated solely

by gravity, passing each other at the midpoint of the incline on separate tracks, controlled from above by brakes. The inclined plane was designed by project engineer Emil Lux, under the direction of chief engineer Leitner. Although Horn began the project, it was completed by the Groedel family and remained in use for over a century, until 1992.

During Horn's time, the company's products included spruce boards, shingles, flooring, slats, column and frame trees, broom handles, tanning and beech railway sleepers. The company sold its products partly at home and partly abroad and primarily produced products to order. Finished goods were transported from Gyulafalva to the town of Papolcz near Covasna and stored. From there, it was transported by haulers to the warehouse in Brasov, from where they were then sent by rail to their destination.

A newspaper article published in the Székely Nation on July 22, 1890 entitled, "Report on the trip to see the timber factory of Dávid Horn in Gyulafalvi," provides in detail the sawmill operation including production capacity, commercial relations and the number and types of employees. For example, employees consisted of:

1. Officials: director, treasurer, technical factory manager, chief engineer, engineer, 3 clerks, 2 supervisors in timber felling, 2 supervisors in transportation, forester, 5 forest guards.

2. Permanent factory workers: gatters (reciprocating saw worker) 24, for circular saws 16, foreman 4, for iron planer 1, for iron lathe 1, forge 2, locksmith 2, heater 4, stump cutter 12, stump feeder 8, board sorter and unloader 12.

3. 400–500 workers for 5 months in summer and autumn during felling and shingles production.

In addition, there were a considerable number of temporary positions.

During that period, lumber was typically produced by using a steam saw, shingles were produced by splitting, and tanning bark was produced by grinding. Tree felling was performed by an axe man with two workers pushing the trunk from two sides until it began to tilt. The cut trunks were peeled and the bark of the young spruce, which is known to contain 8% tannic acid, was dried. The peeled trunks were rolled into water washes and gutters on the hillsides, where a stump was moved by 3-4 workers with gag picks until it slid into the valley.

For the saws, the stumps were transported on axles in summer and on sledges in winter.

The József Saw, the first steam-powered sawmill in Gyulafalva, processed around 100,000 cubic meters of logs annually in 1890. To put that in perspective, a typical single-family home built in the year 2000 used approximately 37 cubic meters of wood, meaning the sawmill could supply enough timber for about 2,700 homes. In modern terms, today's standard logging truck holds roughly 40 cubic meters of timber, which would equate to about 2,500 truckloads of wood each year. To further grasp the volume, consider that a single fir tree with a diameter of 2.5 feet (80 cm) and a height of 30 feet (9.14 meters) yields about 1.52 cubic meters of wood. This means the sawmill processed around 65,800 trees annually, or about 180 trees per day—slightly fewer if the trees were 40 feet (12.2 meters) tall.

In addition to Austria-Hungary, the company's main markets at the time were France, Italy, Bulgaria, Romania, Constantinople and Asia. The company would add many more countries as the years progressed.

The settlement featured a well-equipped folk high school, staffed by a teacher who received free accommodation, lighting, heating, and a salary of 500 forints. Additionally, there were fire crews and reading associations as well as a workers' food cooperative. Housing for permanent workers was also provided, with each family having their own bedroom, kitchen, and pantry. Workers were also given access to free medical care.

In 1890, Horn called for the establishment of a permanent gendarmerie with a Kommando headquarters. Horn justified his request like this: one thousand five hundred workers turn to Kommando, workers of different nationalities, "there is a lot of unrest when paying wages."

That same year, work began on the construction of a railway from Gyulafalva to Covasna, which was to connect to the Brasov-Baromszék County railway and which required about 500,000 forints in investments.

Horn continued to invest heavily in the business, and had concepts and drawings of additional development that he brought to the banks including a new cable car, rail lines, and statements about the quantity and the very high quality of the lumber, but the banks weren't interested.

Horn's E.E.Rt.

Shortly after Horn acquired the Kommando property in 1888 from Gyula Zathureczky, he began a partnership with Baron Jozsef Morpurgo called "Transylvania Forest Industry Morpurgo & Co." (Siebenbürgische Waldindrustrie Morpurgo & Co.). Board members included Baron József Morpurgo from Trieste, Károly Vetter from Lyon and Dávid Horn, resident of Budapest.

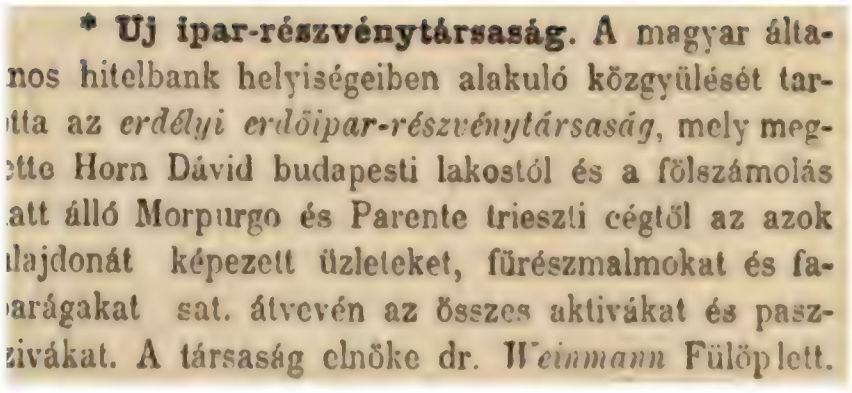
Clipping 14. Transylvania Timber Industry Morpurgo & Company

Királyi törvényszék	A bejegyzést rendelő végzés kelte, a czég folyó- és alszáma	A czég szószerinti szövege	A főtelep és a fióktelepek helye	Czégvezetők és felszámoló czégvezetők	A társaság jogviszonyai	Irattári szám	Jegyzet
Budapesti k. és v. tszék	1891. márc. 23 15767. sz. 2530/1	Siebenbürgische Waldindrustrie Morpurgo & Co.	Főtelep Budapesten	A czég együttesen jegyeztetik.	Közkereseti társaság. A vállalat 1889. évi november hó 24-ik napján vette kezdetét; társtagjai: Báró Morpurgo József trieszti, Vetter Károly lyoni és Horn Dávid, budapesti lakosok, faelárusító iroda iparüzletitulajdonosok. A czég társtagok által akként jegyeztetik, hogy az előnyomott, vagy előírt társasági czéget a társtagok közül kettő együttesen akik egyikének mindég Báró Morpurgo Józsefnek kell lennie, névaláírásukkal és pedig Báró Morpurgo József így: „Baron Josef von Morpurgo" Vetter Károly így: „Ch. Vetter", Horn Dávid pedig így: „Horn Dávid" — ellátják.	1891/V. 6	

Translation: Public limited company. The company began on the 24th of November, 1889 [but wasn't registered until 23 March 1891 -jz]; board members: Baron József Morpurgo from Trieste, Károly Vetter from Lyon and Dávid Horn, residents of Budapest, industrial sales office. The co-members of the company note that the pre-printed or prescribed company is a joint of two of the co-members, one of whom must always be Baron Jozsef Morpurgo, with their name and thus, Baron József Morpurgo: Josef von Morpurgo "Károly Vetter like this," Ch. Vetter "and Dávid Horn like this:" Dávid Horn".

Previously, Baron Morpurgo had a business in Trieste called Morpurgo and Parente, which was noted as Trieste's first trading company. According to reports, Morpurgo and Parente were the first and most significant in Trieste due to their age, prestige, their internal relationship with the huge Parisian world house, and the social status of their boss. The house was founded in 1817 under the company "Parente and Luzzatto" and only later was transformed into "Morpurgo and Parente."

Due to financial issues from expanding into disparate areas, Morpurgo was forced to partner with the Rothschild Bank (supported by the House of Rothschild). However, it eventually went into liquidation, during which time Morpurgo partnered with David Horn and formed a new business. A newspaper article on 24 November 1889 made the announcement:

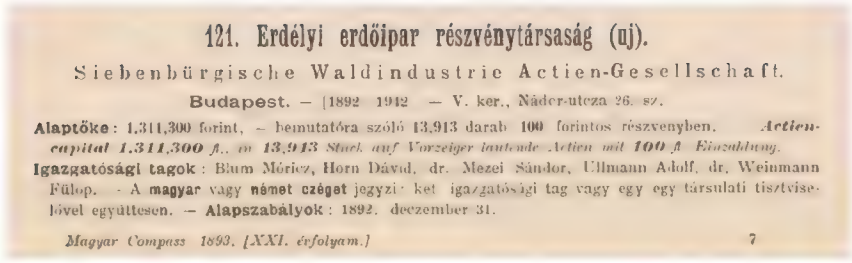


* **Új ipar-részvénytársaság.** A magyar álta-
nos hitelbank helyiségeiben alakuló közgyülését tar-
tta az *erdélyi erdőipar-részvénytársaság*, mely meg-
tte Horn Dávid budapesti lakostól és a fölszámolás
att álló Morpurgo és Parente trieszti cégtől az azok
lajdonát képezett üzleteket, fürészmalmokat és fa-
arágakat sat. átvevén az összes aktivákat és pasz-
zivákat. A társaság elnöke dr. *Weinmann* Fülöp lett.

"New industry limited company. The general meeting of the Hungarian General Credit Bank took place on the premises of the Transylvanian Forest Industry Joint Stock Company, which bought the shops, sawmills and wood industries owned by Dávid Horn, a resident of Budapest, and the Morpurgo and Parente companies in liquidation in Trieste, taking over all assets and liabilities. The president of the company is Dr. Phillip Weinmann." [This actually occurred on 31 December 1892 - jz]

One name that stands out from the above announcement is Dr. Phillip Weinmann who for a time was also Budapest's official notary. The notary attested to all contracts, wills, and other legal forms. In 1879, Weinmann notarized the marriage agreement between József Zeisler and Irma Löwy, this author's great-grandparents.

Another announcement mentions the new company name, funding, and the board of directors.



121. Erdélyi erdőipar részvénytársaság (uj).

Siebenbürgische Waldindustrie Actien-Gesellschaft.

Budapest. – [1892 1942 — V. ker., Náder-utcza 26. sz.

Alaptőke: 1.311,300 forint, – bemutatóra szóló 13,913 darab 100 forintos részvényben. *Actien-capital 1.311,300 fl., in 13,913 Stück auf Vorzeiger lautende Actien mit 100 fl. Einzahlung.*

Igazgatósági tagok: Blum Móricz, Horn Dávid, dr. Mezei Sándor, Ullmann Adolf, dr. Weinmann Fülop. – A **magyar** vagy **német czéget** jegyzi két igazgatósági tag vagy egy egy társulati tisztviselővel együttesen. – **Alapszabályok**: 1892. deczember 31.

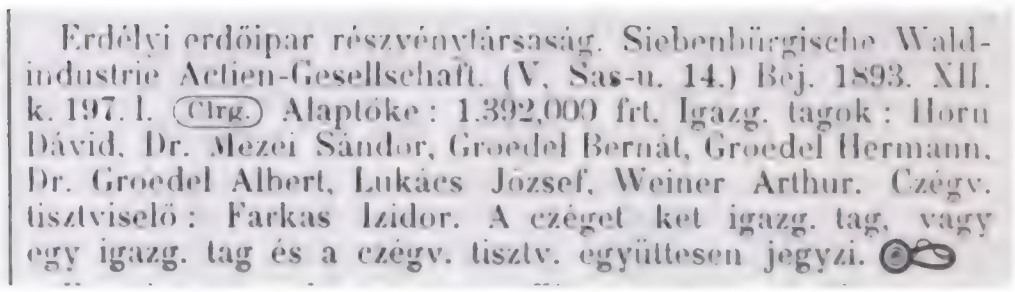
Magyar Compass 1893. [XXI. évfolyam.] 7

121. Transylvania Forest industry Joint Stock Company (new)
(German text for the same name)
Budapest (1892 - 1942). Headquarters Náder-utca 26
[Note: there was a 50-year contract to harvest the timber]
Funding (capital and stock) information
List of Board members
Company can sign in Hungarian or German.
Two board members or one with a company official.
Chartered: 1892, December 31
Published in the Magyar Compass 1893

Apparently, Horn was able to convince the bank to provide a loan and help him reorganize. At the same time, Baron Morpurgo departed, with the "Transylvania Forest Industry Morpurgo & Co" having been liquidated and transformed into David Horn's Transylvania Forest Industry Joint Stock Company, or Erdélyi Erdõipar Részvénytársaság - E.E.Rt. Therefore, Horn owned E.E.Rt beginning in December 1892.

After the reorganization, things didn't get any better as the new business continued to lose money.

During the year, Horn began looking for a business partner to bail him out and provide a new source of funding as the banks were no longer interested in providing loans. About 12 months after the new business was created, in December 1893, the Groedels acquired a controlling interest in the business, but not all of the outstanding shares, and kept Horn and Dr. Mezei as directors. The date of the acquisition is supported in the following announcement:



Erdélyi erdőipar részvénytársaság. Siebenbürgische Waldindustrie Actien-Gesellschaft. (V, Sas-u. 14.) Bej. 1893. XII. k. 197. l. (Clrg.) Alaptőke: 1.392,000 frt. Igazg. tagok: Horn Dávid, Dr. Mezei Sándor, Groedel Bernát, Groedel Hermann, Dr. Groedel Albert, Lukács József, Weiner Arthur. Cégv. tisztviselő: Farkas Izidor. A czéget két igazg. tag, vagy egy igazg. tag és a cégv. tisztv. együttesen jegyzi.

Translation: (after the company names and address (Sas-u 14)) which was David Horn's home and business HQ:

- Registration 1893 12 (December)
- Capital: 1.392.000 forint
- Board of Directors: David Horn, Dr. Sandor Mezei, Bernat Groedel, Hermann Groedel, Dr. Albert Groedel, Jozsef Lukacs, Arthur Weiner (Melanie's brother - Hermann's brother-in-law)
- Officials: Izidor Farkas
- The company is listed by a member of the board of directors or by a member of the board of directors and the chief executive officer jointly (meaning that it requires 2 signatures to make changes).

Newspaper articles typically noted the date of acquisition by the Groedels as 1897 rather than 1893/4. It is assumed that in late 1896 or early 1897, the Groedels acquired the remaining outstanding shares of E.E.Rt, when it became a wholly-owned Groedel concern and when Horn left the business. However, there are inferences of the complete takeover that include an announcement that Phillip Weinmann and one other director left the company in '97, a later article that Horn left the business in '97, and a notice that in October 1896, E.E.Rt HQ changed from Horn's address to Bathory ut 8, which was the Budapest headquarters of the business owned by the Groedels.

At the 1898 summer general meeting of the National Forestry Association in Sepsiszentgyörgy not far from Covasna, at the bottom of the mountain from Kommando in the Valley of Fairys, the participants received a small booklet on the Transylvanian Forest industry from the directors, which included Arthur Groedel and Arthur Weiner, Melanie's brother and Hermann's brother-in-law. A 1:150,000 scale overview map folded in front of the first page of text was attached. During a careful study of the drawing (not included here) and the nomenclature using a magnifying glass, we can follow the 54.3 km long, steam-drawn railway, which had been built, and was extended in 1898 by a 2.7 km section to the border of the country, so that the products of the "Musa" sawmill in Romanian territory could also be transported through Háromszék (Covasna). This was a good example of economic and technical cooperation between Hungary and Romania at the time.

The Gyulafalvi industrial railway, as it was called at the time: the most important forest railway in historical Hungary, was described in the millennial history of Háromszék (Covasna) County as follows:

"...with bold turns through the abundance of primeval forests, in the solemn silence of which he brought the profane noise of the struggle for existence and made it possible to exploit many thousands of acres of forest. "

Six locomotives performed traction on three forest trains, which were later divided into four sections, and the section between Térrét and Covasna was a 760 mm narrow-gauge public railway. There were three three-coupled steam locomotives between the upper glider and the "József" saw; two two-coupled steam locomotives were in circulation between the "József" saw and Hosszúhavas.

Due to the large level difference on the railway, a special gravity-operated glider (Fig. 101) was established at the Commando-Gyulafalvi site. The company prepared and presented the model of the famous technical work for the millennium exhibition in Budapest. The equipment from Th. Obach in Vienna consisted of four main parts: the glide track, the machinery at the upper end, including the rope drums and brake discs, the glider rope and the two scaffold wagons. One of them pushed the empty car down below, the other up the full car, giving it the force it needed to pull the empty car with its weight. On the 1258 m long cable car (4127 ft), 50-55 railway cars were lowered daily.

The products of the Transylvanian Forest Industry not only reached Vienna, but also proved to be competitive in the more distant markets of Western and Eastern Europe and even Africa. They also stood their ground against the products of the large forest industry companies in Bavaria, even though the timber products from their South German rivals were only a hundred kilometers away.

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Kommando was an important and primary revenue source for the Groedels. Once the family had complete ownership, it was run by Bernhard and until 1912, managed by Horn's nephew, Moric Horn.

The wood processed in the sawmills had to be delivered somehow to the roundabouts that had previously been built. The capacity of the initial carriageway could not keep pace with the increase in demand, so a narrow-gauge railway line was established between Kommando and the Covasna transshipment station. Due to the difficult terrain they had to build numerous bridges and cuts. This is also the location of the funicular railway, which is currently an interesting aspect of industrial history and a tourist attraction.

Figure 93. Kommando and Covasna Map Locations

At the beginning of 1898, separating the company's Romanian business from the Hungarian company, it acquired and transformed the Musai industrial estate, located just across the border from Kommando in Romania, into a joint-stock company based in Bucharest, whose managing members include Romania's most renowned statesmen.

Figure 94.
Postcard from Gyulafalva saw mill

The business cut timber in the Basca Mare valley, and then acquired land in the Basca Mica in 1904 (on the Romanian side of the border) which required a railway extension over the watershed at Halom. This new branch replaced the older line to Halom and also extended it by means of the 'S' bend over the Basca Mare-Basca Mica watershed at 1,200m, followed by an extension into Vrancea's Zabala Valley.

Figure 95.
A train hauling firewood in Kommando (1929)

The length of the Kommando railway network was dozens of kilometers, split in two at Kommando following the valleys of Nagy-Basás and Kis-Baska, and then split into several branches again along their tributaries. The total length of the network reached 200 kilometers (124 miles).

The last forest purchase was made by the company in 1912: it bought the huge forest complex in Neroussa. Even more surprising is that in just two years they sold the whole thing to a group of German capitalists. Why? Herman, the family's financial authority, may have smelled tensions in Central Europe, feared war, and saw it advisable to get rid of the forests of the southeastern Carpathians: but it may also have been large-scale speculation.

Business Practices

The following story demonstrates the business practices of the time; the incestuous relationships, improper influence and conflicts of interest between business owners and local politicians due to non-existent or lax laws.

Count Mikes Story

Grazer Tagblatt

Figure 96. Funicular Inclined Plane: Covasna (lower area) to Kommando

Monday, July 30, 1906

"Politics and Business in Hungary. Once again, a neat story from Hungarian domestic life comes to light, which, if it is true in its details, aptly illuminates the practice beyond the mixing of politics and business. This matter is particularly noteworthy this time because the current Minister of Justice, Mr. Geza Polonyi, seems to be heavily involved.

The large timber company Gebrüder Groedel, as the 'Arbeiter-Zeitung' reports, has made millions from logging in Hungary. For years, there have been all sorts of rumors about how this company acquired forests from municipalities and corporations at dirt-cheap prices. The lawyers for the Groedel firm were Geza Polonyi and Dionys Sebeș.

Recently, the Groedels have turned their attention to Transylvania to exploit its rich forest resources. However, they faced a significant competitor in Count Mikes, whom they could not easily overcome. But they found an opportunity to entangle Count Mikes in lawsuits that severely harmed him and undermined his credit.

The German company Kaiser & Co. was to build a cable car for Count Mikes. Kaiser & Co. was persuaded by a third party to delay the construction of the cable car despite the agreed penalties, and to halt it altogether for a while, causing Count Mikes' operations to stall for months, which caused him great harm. Count Mikes was forced to take legal action, which escalated into a tangled web of lawsuits. The lawyer for Kaiser & Co. was Geza Polonyi.

Last year, Members of Parliament Geza Polonyi and Dionys Sebeș improperly influenced the course of these lawsuits. Since then, Geza Polonyi has become the Minister of Justice, and Dionys Sebeș has become the head of Transylvanian justice. Geza Polonyi's law practice was transferred to his son, Member of Parliament Desider Polonyi, and Dionys Sebeș also transferred his representation of Groedel's affairs to Desider Polonyi.

The lawsuits involving Count Mikes continued, and recently his business books were officially confiscated and taken to Kronstadt for expert examination, although the necessary experts are not lacking at the competent Kezdivasarhely Court. But in Kronstadt is the Transylvanian central office of the Groedel Brothers, whose employees can not only influence the local experts but also have access to Mikes' business books.

Now, officially, Desider Polonyi, the Minister of Justice's son, influences the course of the lawsuits. It is therefore understandable that people in Transylvania—and elsewhere in Hungary—connect the previously unplanned organization of the Transylvanian justice section, the appointment of Dionys Sebeș as its head, the legal dispute of Count Mikes, and the million-dollar business of the Groedel firm. A part of the press is also discussing these matters quite openly, but neither the Polonyis, father and son, nor Dionys Sebeș are responding to this."

Figure 97.

Original Casino with whom appears to be Bernhard (L)

Figure 98.

A restored train on the tracks from Covasna to Kommando.

It was not operational in 2014 during my visit, but it was available to view.

Photo courtesy of Andris Papucs

In 1903, the brothers were awarded nobility from King Franz Joseph I. The people of Kommando came out to celebrate - see Figure 100.

Once again, the King has honored a family that has earned merit for its work. Groedel Ármin, Groeder Bernát and Groedel Albert were granted the Hungarian nobility with the first name "Gyulafalvi".

On the occasion of the award, a great celebration was held in the Groedel villa, in which, in addition to acquaintances and public figures, members of the company also took part and gave their bosses enthusiastic oaths of gratitude.

The Groedel brothers, namely Hermann Groedel, a resident of Budapest, and Bernát Groedel, a local engineer, and Albert Groedel, a resident of Vienna, are the owners of the Groedel brothers in Maramures Island and Demniaivyzna, and the directors of the Transylvanian timber industry from Friedberg in Hesse. Their father, who died in 1896, moved from Regensburg to Marmaros Island and in 1874 entered into a contract with the Treasury, which laid the foundations of the Groedel family. This large timber business, limited to export, showed the way for Hungarian timber abroad. In 1894, the Groedel Brothers took over the Transylvanian timber company; in this company alone they employ about 6,000 people, and they are also co-owners of the Skole estate in Galicia, which covers 67,000 acres. Here also 6,000 people are employed. For years the products of the Transylvanian forest industry have been exported by sea. Wherever the Groedels set up a company, their first task was to build schools for the children of the workers. In general, they have always given a sign of their philanthropic love.

Figure 99. [top] Rebuilt Casino after the fire destroyed the original building, and [bottom] street view from the factory

Figure 100. A large group of guests gathered to honor the Groedel family (September, 1903)

The Decline of Kommando

By the early 20th century, Kommando (Comandău) had become one of the most advanced timber processing centers in the empire, boasting an extensive network of narrow-gauge railways, electric-powered sawmills, and a highly skilled workforce. However, despite its prominence, the settlement's prosperity was ultimately tied to the shifting economic, political, and territorial realities of Central Europe.

The first major blow came with World War I, which disrupted trade routes and forced the Groedel family to navigate a volatile market. The loss of their four steamships crippled their ability to distribute products efficiently. Although the company managed to recover in the postwar years, the Treaty of Trianon (1920) reshaped the region's borders, placing Kommando under Romanian sovereignty. This transition came with new bureaucratic challenges, increased taxation, and restrictions on foreign ownership, further complicating operations.

The Great Depression (1929–1933) intensified these difficulties, sharply reducing demand for timber exports and pushing many sawmills into financial distress. While the Groedels were able to sustain operations through long-term contracts and strategic investments, cash flow became increasingly precarious, even causing a rift in the family. At the same time, political instability in Romania and Hungary created uncertainty over the future of land and industrial holdings.

During the crisis, the "old" Groedels were replaced at the helm of the business by the "young" barons; Hermann's sons, Otto, Richard and Albert, who replaced the management of the Romanian branch. Victor Steinberger was replaced by his son, Alexandru, a well-versed merchant, but who failed to fully recover the company's business. Similarly, Ludovic Leitner gradually ceded some of his duties to his son, Stefan, also an engineer. Victor and Ludovic retired to their homes in Brasov.

The third generation of the Groedel family (Zadyk's grandsons), was heavily in debt by 1931, and could no longer pay the workers. The son of a merchant named Lichtenstein kept the settlers for a year so as not to leave the plant. The last Groedel, probably Richard or Viktor, later repaid the debt. After the Second World War, there was only one timber factory as the sawmill in Gyulafalva had been closed down, and after that the settlement itself was merged into Kommando.

In 1940, the Second Vienna Award saw northern Transylvania—including Kommando—returned to Hungary. While this initially seemed to offer relief from Romanian administrative constraints, the reality proved far more complex. The Hungarian government's economic policies favored state-controlled industries and placed heavy restrictions on Jewish-owned businesses. The Groedel family's assets came under increased scrutiny, and with the onset of World War II, the timber industry was repurposed to serve military demands rather than private enterprises.

By 1944, as the war shifted decisively against the Axis powers, German forces and their Hungarian allies implemented anti-Jewish policies with greater severity. The Groedel family, already under pressure, faced confiscation of their assets, and many members of the family were forced to flee or, as with Albert, deported. Kommando's once-thriving sawmill operations fell under state control, and production rapidly declined due to mismanagement, lack of investment, and wartime destruction.

With the Soviet occupation of Romania in 1945 and the subsequent establishment of a Communist regime, the family's remaining properties were fully nationalized. Kommando was integrated into the state-controlled lumber industry, which lacked the efficiency, expertise, and innovation that had characterized its peak under private ownership. Equipment deteriorated, skilled workers left, and what had once been a model industrial hub descended into stagnation.

By the 1950s, the town's prominence in the timber trade had faded, and its population dwindled as economic opportunities diminished. The sawmills, once symbols of ingenuity and progress, either closed or operated at a fraction of their former capacity. The Groedel name was erased from official records, and their contributions to the region were largely forgotten, buried under layers of state propaganda that credited postwar industrialization to Communist efforts rather than the vision of Jewish entrepreneurs who had built Kommando from the ground up.

Today, Kommando is a popular resort, a starting point for mountain hikes and a ski resort. On its southeastern border there are peat bogs guarding many protected plant species. The sights of the village are mainly the technical-historical monuments of the industrial estate, the so-called Treasury house border-

ing the settlement to the east, the Little Castle built in 1890, the Lichtenstein House built in 1922 (now the town hall), Bernhard's house - now a doctor's office built between 1927 and 1928, a memorial plaque in honor of the 1936 strike, a headstone erected in memory of the heroes of 1848-49 rises in the village park, and a monument to the heroic dead of World War I.

While timber is still harvested in the area, it no longer holds the industrial significance it once did. Few remnants of the Groedel era survive, apart from sections of the narrow-gauge railway, the funicular's path down the mountainside into Covasna, and traces of the old sawmills. The town's transformation from an economic powerhouse to a footnote in history reflects the broader upheavals of 20th-century Central Europe.

Although much of Kommando's history has faded, the Groedel family's influence remains undeniable. Their innovations, investments, and perseverance shaped not only the landscape but also the lives of the thousands who once called Kommando home.

The following newspaper articles document the gradual decline of Kommando, offering firsthand accounts of the economic hardships, factory closures, and the eventual collapse of the once-thriving timber industry. These reports provide valuable insight into the struggles faced by the workers and the impact of shifting political borders on the Groedel enterprise.

December 12, 1942

Keleti Ujsag

No more work on Kommando!

The Transylvanian Forest Industry R.-T. It has been maintaining Kommando, one of the largest and most prosperous wood companies in historical Hungary, for about 50 years. The company is also in the interest of the Grödel consortium. The company had vast forests, but the areas that could still be extracted were relocated to Romania due to the boundary set in the Vienna Arbitration Judgment. As a result, the company's cutting areas ran out and the board of directors of the joint-stock company announced to the Ministry of Industry back in the summer that it would be forced to cease operations shortly because it no longer had the opportunity to continue working...

February 14, 1943, Keleti Ujsag – Article excerpts:

Komandó's 1,300 Székely residents can pick up a walking stick in the spring

The formerly huge lumber yard will cease to exist and the days of Komandó village are numbered

The most valuable Székely island must be saved — regardless of the future fate of the company

In the middle of December 1942, the "Keleti Újság" pointed out the unique situation that the Székely population of the Komandó industrial estate village in Triszék County had found themselves in due to the border line drawn in the Csöntö court judgment in Vienna. This village derived its income from a huge wood plant belonging to Grödel's interests. However, the border line drawn in the Vienna decision left the southern part of Háromszék county and a part of the huge forests owned by that company to Romania. Because of this, the company's areas ran out, and last year the situation reached such a point that the company decided to stop work. ...

The huge factories are going down.

Those who visit Komandó today are witness to the sad agony of the once flourishing industrial complex. There are huge factories, in which the sawmillers have been pouring their excellent pine boards and lumber for about half a century, and if we still hear the distinctive music of the sawmill in the winter silence, it is only because an ordinary woodcutter is chopping up the firewood logs — at the boilers of the power plant, for heating. The upper factory is completely silent. His saws are standing. Long lines of log trucks stand around the factory building in the half-meter snow. They rust. They are no longer needed.

And here the question is no longer what will happen to the company, but rather: is it possible to save the village of Komando from destruction and the many important national interests that are linked to the survival of this small but valuable island?

It is unnecessary to outline further details of the development. Let's note just one fact: in the early 1930s, when the economic crisis did not break the timber economy, 800 industrialists and skilled workers worked at the commando camp, and an army of 3,000 workers worked in your forests! The company had several industrial railways built so that the logs harvested in the Regatta forests could be transported to the commando factory. A huge sawmill also worked in the regatta area. The capacity

of the two plants reached 300,000 cubic meters per year in the most prosperous years of the economy.

The economic crisis also affected the Grödels. The family concern alone couldn't bear the burden of increasing debts and was transformed into a joint-stock company. The majority of the shares were transferred to the Swiss Holdingbank and a large Viennese financial institution. Baron Viktor Grödel — remained at the company as a paid director. The new joint-stock company operated first in Brasov and then in Bucharest under the name "Societatea Ardeleana pentru Industria Forestiera" until the decision in Vienna.

Consequences of the decision

However, the situation created by the decision in Vienna brought not only personal changes. The company's holdings were so depleted by the unfortunate demarcation of the boundary line that the forests owned by the company could only provide about one year's worth of work. The company was forced to gradually lay off its workers, and in the spring of 1941, 250 workers were laid off.

So today the situation at Komando, which used to be bubbly, is as follows: The saws have been standing since November 27, 1942. Some of the workers left, the rest were employed in various positions. Craftsmen carry out repair work. This is just an additional payment.

Which means that today's 1,200-1,300 inhabitants of Komandó will be able to pick up a walking stick in the spring[71].

And in Háromszék county, in a few months we will witness a phenomenon that we only know from American reports: a colony with a thriving life will cease to exist as of tomorrow due to a change in circumstances.

The Kommando factory began to decay after 1960. According to a decree, the machines could not be repaired on site and most of the equipment transported was never returned. The fatal windstorm of 1995, which fell 2.5 million cubic meters of firewood and felled entire parts of the forest, was a fatal blow. Until the forest was regenerated, a logging restriction was introduced, which was tantamount to bankruptcy of the logging company. After 110 years of near-continuous operation, the facility finally shut down at 10 a.m. on October 17, 1999.

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[71] *This likely means forced migration or displacement due to layoffs*

Figure 101.
Houses in Kommando (2014)

Figure 102.
Common Mode of Transportation in Kommando (2014) (background machine is a log hauler)

The following newspaper articles provide a glimpse into the challenges faced by the *Transylvanian Forest Industry Company* during the period when the Groedels acquired control. These reports highlight early operational difficulties, including accidents, financial developments, and infrastructure setbacks, offering insight into the risks and complexities of the timber business that the Groedels would face.

February 17, 1894: Transylvanian Forest Industry Company:

A railway accident in Gyulafalva. A shocking accident occurred on Horn's Gyulafalvi industrial car. On the 13th of this month at 6 o'clock in the morning from the "Commando" factory, under the direction of driver János Dettelbach, 3 wagons of 10 wagons carrying planks loaded on "Siklós" on the 14th klmtr column of the Transylvanian forest industry between the "Commando bypass" station derailed in front of a bridge in a sharp turn due to the extraordinary speed, and the last car, together with the brakemen Kozma Ferencz from Zagonia and József Csutak, a shifter assisting the Kovászna resident, broke the guardrails of the bridge and fell into the abyss below. The crashing car also pulled the two cars in front of it off the track, but only their plank cargo fell into the depths and was towed to the station 700 mtr away with the intact sleeper, as the driver did not notice the accident as the signal line was not pulled so could not be notified by the train's crew.

Ferencz Kozma, who fell under the abyss, died there, while Csutak fell and remained alive in soft snow.

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June 30, 1894, The Transylvanian Forest industry repository

On Thursday, the company held an annual general meeting in Budapest under the chairmanship of the notary public, Dr. Philip Weinmann. Last year's profit was HUF 73,340, of which HUF 10,000 was voted for the CEO as a commission for zealous operation.

It was decided to pay a dividend of five percent on the shares. The share capital was increased by issuing new shares. The General Meeting then voted warmly to the Board of Directors, and in particular to CEO Dávid Horn. The Board of Directors and the Supervisory Board were re-elected.

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February 13, 1895

An unfortunate fall. Gergely Szakács, a resident of Gheorgheni-Szentdomokos, undertook a decision in the Carpathian forests purchased by the Transylvanian Forest Industry Company. To count the logs, two men including Gergely took a small sleigh and rode it from Gyulafalva to the woods for their workers. The sled was just big enough for two of them to sit on with their backs to each other. They also carried a rifle next to them to keep them safe. At a large, steep slope, as they headed home, the sled capsized and those sitting on it fell into an embankment. The fall was so unfortunate that the rifle penetrated the body of Gergely Szakács.

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April 7, 1897
Erdélyi Erdoipar

The "József" steam boiler in Gyulafalva, which belongs to the Transylvanian Forest industry part, and its associated outbuildings have completely burned down at 22 o'clock. According to the police investigation, the occurrence of a fire can be said to be original due to the negligence of one of the supervisors at night.

BUDAPEST

Budapesti Napló, May 13, 1902

"Donation to the Association of Journalists. Ármin Groedel donated two thousand crowns to the Budapest Journalists' Association Fund. He sent his donation along with the following letter addressed to President József Vészi. 'Having moved from my rural residence to the capital, brought me closer to the space of operation of your esteemed association, which has already paid close attention to its small operating space, my interest has only increased due to the immediacy, and in order to further the realization of their noble goals, commensurate with my modest talent, I request you to contribute to the increase of their fund, and for this purpose I offer two thousand crowns, which I am fortunate enough to have inherited here. It will be of great comfort to me if, with my modest contribution, even if only a little, I can benefit their endeavors, for which I have sincere sympathy and appreciation. I am in Budapest on May 10, 1902 with patriotic greetings. v. Groedel Armin s. k.'"

Figure 103.

Hősök Tere – Hero's Square, Budapest, with Hermann and Bernhard's homes on Lendvay ut.

Hősök Tere, known as Heroes' Square, is a magnificent landmark in Budapest that captures the spirit of Hungary. This grand square features statues of the nation's legendary leaders and warriors positioned around the towering Millennium Monument. At its peak, the Archangel Gabriel holds the Hungarian crown, symbolizing the country's enduring strength and unity. Flanked by historic museums, Heroes' Square is a impressive tribute to Hungary's rich past and vibrant culture.

Figure 104.

Hermann and Melanie Groedel Residence, Lendvay ut.26, Budapest

Figure 105.

Lendvay ut. 26

Figure 106.

Lendvay ut. 26

As early as 1899 Hermann owned several residences on Lendvay ut, across from Hero's Square. He acquired the mansion at Lendvay ut 26 in 1903, around the time of the family's ennoblement, and sold those at 18 and 20 Lendvay ut.

Bernát and family lived next door at Lendvay ut 28, which later became Arena ut 98, and today is Dosza Gyorgy, ut 98 owned by the Fidesz political party as their headquarters.

In 1919, the communist party took over Hungary for a few months, during which time they nationalized high-end art owned by private citizens and put some of it on display in Budapest. Approximately 4,500 works of art were transferred from private to public ownership, and about 700 items went on display (the return of all the works to their rightful owners occurred after the fall of the regime on August 1, 1919). The administration also cataloged ownership. Herman Groedel is listed in the catalog with the names of nine tapestries he surrendered. Unfortunately, there are no photos or drawings to confirm the items or their authenticity. A researcher named Sandor Juhasz had emailed me, asking if I had any additional information about the tapestries. Unfortunately, neither my cousins nor I have additional information about the tapestries. Unfortunately, we have only two pictures of the interior from its early years. One is a picture of a table supporting a feast, maybe taken during a holiday or party. There is no date, but I would guess the mid-late 1920s. However, in the background, hanging on the wall, are two tapestries!

I sent the picture to Sandor and he was able to confirm the identity of one of the two (the one on the right (Figure 105.) or centered in the photo). The one is from the Decius Mus cycle. For those of you, like myself, who are unfamiliar with this particular piece of art, it was a series of tapestries created by Peter Paul Rubens in the 17th century. According to the catalog, the family owned five of these Ruben tapestries and had four more on display from other artists; one from the late 16th century. Unfortunately, it is not known where they are today.

FALKÁRPITOK.

(Groedel Herman gyűjteményéből.)

1.-5. **Decius Mus,** római consul története
Brüsszeli falkárpitok Rubens, Peter Paul kartonjai után. 17. század.
1. A consul elmondja álmát, mely szerint a két ellenséges sereg közül az marad győztes, amelynek vezére elesik.
2. Az áldozatnézők rosszat jósolnak a római seregnek.
3. A főpap megáldja a halálba induló consult.
4. A consul halála.
5. A consul temetése.

6. **Mortlake-i (angol) falkárpit a 17. század első feléből.**
József elmondja álmait szüleinek és testvéreinek.

7. **Brüsszeli falkárpit a 17. század második feléből.**
Pásztorjelenet: birkanyírás.

8. **Brüsszeli falkárpit a 16. század végéről.**
Jákob és családja Ézsau előtt.

9. **Brüsszeli falkárpit a 17. századból.**
Vértanu halála. Római jelenet.

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Figure 107.
Artwork list and Ruben's tapestry

Eventually, the house at Lendvay ut 26 was sold and went through at least one renovation that partitioned the mansion into multiple apartments over three floors. The family was able to claim one of the apartments on the middle level, where Iren, daughter Judit, and her grandchildren lived until it too was sold in 2021. The church resides on the ground level.

On October 29, 2002, the newspaper, Magyar Nemzet, published a brief article about Bernhard's house across from Hero's Square.

The History of the Groedel Palace in Terézváros

The Groedel family's Art Nouveau-style bourgeois palace, built at the end of the 19th century, was the scene of several bloody and peaceful political events. During the occupation of Budapest in the late summer of 1919, the Romanian army billeted its generals in Baron Groedel's palace. Following the Soviet occupation after the Second World War, and then nationalization, the building was usurped by the State Church Office, which became the center of communist religious persecution. Since the change of regime, the Terézváros Palace has been the headquarters of Fidesz, which was later sold and bought back by the party.

Few buildings are as striking from Heroes' Square as the Art Nouveau palace on the corner of Dózsa György út and Lendvay utca. Its past is intertwined with the history of the Groedel family, who moved to the street in the last years of the 19th century.

According to surviving documents, the builder, Géza Henrik Brüll, originally applied to the city council for a building permit for a summer house, but the imposing building, designed by Aladár Kármán and Gyula Ullmann, can hardly be called a summer house, given its dimensions.

Henrik Géza Brüll was only able to enjoy the splendid residence for a few years: financial problems forced him to look for cheaper accommodation for his family. The Groedels, who already owned several houses on the street at the time, bought the building at a bargain price. Bernat Groedel moved into the house with his wife and 10-year-old daughter.

The Art Nouveau palace blends neo-Gothic and Art Nouveau features. In the 1950s, the State Ecclesiastical Office set up a meeting room in the neo-Renaissance hall. The communists controlled the organized persecution of religion from here. Fortunately, the original wall paneling of the room did not suffer the temporary change of function, and the French tapestry still decorates the room intact. The green marble

mantel, reflecting the corduroy, is remarkable. In the early 20th century, this noble material was found in the homes of most wealthy families.

According to a book entitled Stories of Pest-Buda, as the Groedel parents led a quiet, bourgeois life, so turbulent were the relationships of their only daughter, Theodora. The Groedel daughter married twice after the death of her father. Her first husband, the handsome, charming - though one-eyed - Emerich von Thurn und Taxis, was an imperial cavalry general. According to her recollections, the general often and willingly posed on horseback, wearing hussar's uniform so that people could see his noble bearing and his fancy uniform. Tired of her husband's 'showy' life, the young wife divorced him. Her second husband was Lajos Korbuly, a landowner from Arad.

The couple accumulated a lot of artworks in the palace. In addition to valuable paintings and antiques, Theodora Groedel also collected children's toys dating back hundreds of years. In 1929, she revealed her particular passion to a reporter from the Art Collector newspaper. After my death, it will go to a museum. To which country they will go, I don't know. But perhaps we should not talk about that. For there is nothing sadder for a collector than to remember that the objects of his passion are scattered to the winds."

The 'political career' of the Grand Civic Palace began after the First World War. In the late summer of 1919, as the Romanian army, which had invaded our country all the way to Budapest, set up its headquarters in the Gellért Hotel in Buda, its generals were billeted in Baron Groedel's palace. The marble plaque on the wall of the building, which commemorates the victims of the communist religious persecution, bears witness to the building's turbulent past.

After the change of regime, the palace became the headquarters of Fidesz, which later sold it and bought it back, so that the Civic Party still owns it today.

During WWII, the bombing of Budapest destroyed many historical buildings and rooms within important buildings, and some were ruined during the communist era of the 1950s. Since 2000, the Hungarian government decided to recreate several rooms originally located within Budavari Palace on Buda Hill, including one called Szent Istvan Hall. In attempting to reconstruct the room, which was created during the time of dualism (19th century), the artists needed a reference to recreate several artifacts.

"Fortunately, they found a contemporary parallel, the villa of the wealthy wood merchant Ármin Groedel in Pest's Lendvay Street, which is now owned by the Russian

Orthodox Church. The Groedel brothers, who also maintained a good relationship with Prime Minister István Tisza, once decided to have a private St. István room made for themselves - probably with the same people who made the one in the castle."

The quote above and text below are excerpted and translated from August 15, 2020 Magyar Nemzet.

"A simplified copy of the room was made, which, except for the Zsolnay ceramics (which were not ordered), is identical to the original in most details, or at least very similar to it. The inspection of Groedel's room clarified a number of detailed issues, recalls Péter Rostás, especially regarding the gilded bronze chandeliers and wall arms, which were made in Rudolf Kissling's factory. The reconstruction of the metal elements was undertaken by Ádám Vecsey, perhaps the country's most sought-after metal and goldsmith restorer.

Figure 108. Chandeliers

It turned out that in the Budapest villa of the once wealthy Groedel brothers, the living room that they had prepared for themselves, based on the design of the Szent István room, was smaller in size and with more modest content. As contemporaries, they were still able to trust the contractors who provided the best of their skills at the royal residence, commissioned by Alajos Hauszmann. The Groedels' two gilded brass chandeliers and wall sconces were therefore made in the bronze factory of Rudolf Kissling, who also produced the original chandeliers in the Szent István hall. Moreover, the majority of the castings probably came out of the same molds. The only essential difference is that, while the larger chandeliers in the Szent István hall have an octagonal rim, the smaller ones in the Groedel villa only have six sides.

ADDITIONAL BUSINESSES AND ENNOBLEMENT

THE GROEDEL BROTHERS STEAMSHIP COMPANY

The bulk of the contracts that the Groedels had concluded with the Hungarian government stipulated that a large percentage of the harvested timber was to be exported. Since the company's founding, the business contracted with shipping companies paying the going rate. However, in about 1902, a young man named Jenő Pollacsek (changed to Polnay in 1911), who worked for the Groedels as a manager and quickly moved up the management ranks, convinced Hermann to set up a steamship company to transport timber and other cargo for export on their own steamers rather than continuously paying increasing rates. As detailed below, Pollacsek, then 25, would go on to have an interesting career in shipping and a rollercoaster of a life.

The new business plan soon came to fruition as they created the Groedel Brothers Steamship Company, Ltd. with Pollacsek in charge and contracted with Messrs. William Gray and Company in West Hartlepool, England, to build the ships.

Between 1903 and 1904, four ships were built, with the first two being the *Melanie Groedel* and the *Gizella Groedel*, and then a further two were built - the *Margit Groedel* and the *Ludwig Groedel*. All four ships proudly plowed the water with Hungarian colors and the letter "G" on the flags, masts, and chimneys. The first ship to be delivered was the Melanie Groedel on April 15, 1903. She was announced in the following manner:

April 15, 1903

Messrs. William Gray and Company, Limited, on Saturday last, launched the handsome steel screw steamer Melanie Groedel, for the Groedel Brothers Steamship Company, Limited, of London and Budapest. She will take the highest class in Lloyd's, and is of the following dimensions: Length, over all, 336 ft.; breadth, 47 ft.

; and depth, 24 ft. 10 in,. with long bridge, hood and topgallant forecastle. The saloon, staterooms, captain's, officers' and engineers' rooms, etc., will be fitted up in houses on the bridge deck, and the crew's berths in the forecastle. The hull is built with deep frames, cellular double-bottom and aft peak ballast tank being provided. Eleven steam winches are fitted, also steam steering gear amidships; hand screw gear aft; patent direct steam windlass; large marine type donkey boiler; and a very complete outfit for a first-class cargo steamer. Triple-expansion engines are being supplied by the Central Marine Engine Works of the builders, having cylinders 24in., and two large steel boilers for a working pressure of 180lbs. per square inch.

Three ships were named after the brothers' wives: Melanie Groedel, Gisella Groedel and Margit Groedel. The fourth was named Ludwig Groedel after Hermann's uncle, mentor and business co-founder.

The ships transported a variety of products, including coal, grain, and, of course, lumber. They sailed throughout Europe, England, South America and the USA. In the US, they arrived at the ports of Mobile, Alabama; Gulfport, Mississippi; and Pensacola, Florida, transporting cargo in both directions. They stopped at many European ports, including their European HQ in Galatz, Romania, Portugal, Greece and Italy. The ships could be found in at least Buenos Aires in South America.

In the February 18, 1933 edition of the newspaper "South-American Hungarian," a long "Letter to the Editor" was published with the headline, *"Hungarian Ships in the Oceans...When there was still a Hungarian port and the Hungarian-flagged steamer was not uncommon."* The author's name is Károly Veszprémi, who was the son of Soma Veszprémi, the last manager of the Groedel Brothers Steamship Company in Galatz. In his letter, Veszprémi reminisced about Hungarian timber exports during the time when the port of Seattle in Washington (USA), a huge lumber exporter, was still under construction. At that time, the Romanian Danube port of Galatz was one of the most important hubs for Hungarian shipping. The Groedels would harvest the timber and transport it by rail from Transylvania to Galatz, which was then loaded onto a ship and transported to England, Egypt, and other locals.

Veszprémi then notes that Polnay, who had been running the Groedel Brothers Steamship Company as CEO, left and founded his own shipping compa-

ny called "Atlantica." Veszprémi wrote that the four new steamers weren't enough to carry the exports. So, instead of building additional ships, the Groedels acquired two Italian steamers, the "Indificienter" and the "Puccini," which also flew the Hungarian flag. When Polnay left the company to run Atlantica in 1906, Veszprémi's father took over and managed the company's affairs until the British seized the ships at the outbreak of WWI, as you'll read below.

Veszprémi became the business manager for the Groedel shipping company in Galatz after Pollacsek left in 1906.

Jenő Pollacsek and the founding and functioning of Atlantica

Hermann surrounded himself with smart people, and Pollacsek was one. Pollacsek studied in Debreczen, where he also attended the law academy as an extraordinary student. He began his commercial career on Maramures Island (Máramarossziget), going to Vienna as a soldier. After spending his volunteer year with the 14th Artillery Regiment, he continued his commercial studies in Moravia, focusing on various forestry and timber production sectors. In 1895, at age 23, he became an official of the Transylvanian Forest Industry Limited Company in Budapest (Erdélyi Erdőipari Rt.), where he organized the Groedel company's export trade. As executive secretary of the Association of Timber Producers and Timber Traders, he edited the Bulletin of the Timber Industry and Timber Trade for a few years. From this magazine, the Faügyi Szemle later developed, of which he was also the editor for many years, published twice a week in Hungarian and German. As the head of the export business of the Transylvanian Forest Industry Joint Stock Company, he was in constant contact with the European timber trade and timber production markets and published a series of articles in the Wood Review on the relationship between the markets and the state of the timber trade. Later, after organizing the Groedel Brothers Steamship Limited Liability Company in London for the export of the Hungarian timber trade, as the managing director of this company and the Transylvanian Forest Industry Limited Liability Company, he could no longer edit the newsletter as he was busy every other month; therefore, the Wood Review merged with a Viennese trade magazine, taking its place in its title.

In 1906, Pollacsek presented a new idea, not to Hermann, but to investors and government officials, as he wanted to build his own company. He talked the

Hungarian minister of commerce, Count Béla Serényi, and the English-Austrian Bank into supporting the foundation of a new Hungarian shipping public limited company. The Bank financed the company, and the Hungarian government supported him. This ensured large-scale support for shipbuilding and transportation fees to those tramp shipping companies that transported goods important to Hungary.

The company utilized the innovative managerial ideas Pollacsek proposed to efficiently organize their ship's traffic between the bigger ports. This included a number of arrangements, including starting a Romanian sister company under the name of Societate Atlantica. This business supervised the railway transportation of the export timber of Transylvanian Forestry Co., which was owned by the Groedels, and provided Atlantica with continuous business. Due to this and other related businesses, Pollacsek became quite wealthy.

In the following years, Polnay served as the president of the National Association of Hungarian Jews, and founded and edited the Hungarian Jewish Military Archive during the First World War. And although Polnay himself was persecuted, during World War II in 1944, he ran the Budapest Kindergarten Association, an orphanage, and was responsible for saving the lives of nearly 400 children from the Gestapo.

THE STORY OF THE STEAMER MARGIT GROEDEL

On September 6, 1904, during the Russo-Japanese War, a Russian cruiser stopped the British-flagged steamer Margit Groedel near Cape St. Vincent, Portugal. The ship was carrying coal, and Russian officers boarded it, reviewing its papers and causing a 24-hour delay. They warned the captain that had the ship been near Japan, they would have sunk it, which surprised many, since it was only carrying coal.

This event became global news because the war was happening between Russia and Japan in the Pacific, but the Russians stopped the ship far away in European waters. There were suspicions about why Russian ships were so far from the war zone. Reports noted that at least nine other Russian ships were present in the area, which raised questions about their activities off of the European continent while the rest of their navy was engaged in battles with Japan on the other side of the globe.

At the time, food, coal, and fuel were considered war contraband. Even though the Margit Groedel's cargo wouldn't reach Japan anytime soon, the Russians stopped it because of an alliance between Japan and Britain signed in 1902. Britain and Japan had become allies, and the Russians were trying to prevent any British goods from supporting Japan in the war, even indirectly.

NY Evening Tribune, September 17, 1904

BRITISH STEAMER STOPPED.

Vessel From Cardiff With Coal Brought About by Russian Cruiser.

Constantinople, Sept. 17.—The British steamship Margit Groedel, with a cargo of coal from Cardiff for Sulina, was stopped by the Russian cruiser Terek on Sept. 6 off Cape St. Vincent. The Terek fired three blank shots to bring the steamer about.

Two Russian officers and two armed men boarded the Margit Groedel and overhauled her papers. The captain of the Margit Groedel was asked to sign a declaration that he had not been put to any inconvenience by the delay.

He at first refused, but when told that his steamer would be detained until the arrival of the Russian admiral, he complied and the collier was allowed to proceed. One of the Russian officers stated that there were nine other Russian cruisers in the vicinity.

Moving Coal

In 1914, shortly before WWI, many governments and businesses were competing to secure a position for themselves in the developing economic life of the Balkans (southeastern Europe including Greece, Serbia, Bulgaria, Macedonia and Bosnia.) In addition to German, French and Italian banks and entrepreneurs looking for investment opportunities, another group was interested in the Balkans. This one was led by Baron Hermann Groedel. At that time, the consortium headed by the Baron had recently acquired coal from the Bulgarian government, planning to establish a "joint stock company" to take over the coal mines. Although it is doubtful that the consortium ever acquired the coal mines (probably due to the war), it's now clear why the Groedel Bros. steamers were carrying coal to other countries before WWI rather than solely lumber - they owned it.

Ship Name Changes

In 1914, the company changed all the ships' names, having dropped the name "Groedel." The new names were: The Melanie, The Margit, The Gisella and The Milly. It's possible the name change was to conceal their obvious German heritage due to the war. In addition, it is unclear for whom the "Milly" was named, for the former Ludwig Groedel.

Consequences of the War

In July 1912, the British government leased the Gisela Groedel for the fleet for an indefinite period as an escort vessel. The lease was seen as a sign of the trust shown by the British government towards the Groedel Steamship Company, and must have been profitable for the company, more so than shipping coal and timber. That lasted until 1916. By the beginning of the war in 1914, all four ships had been requisitioned by the British Admiralty and were leased at "Blue Book rates," with the money held by the Public Trustee.

Two years into the war, in 1916, the British government issued an order for enemy businesses to be shut down due to the recently passed "Trading with the Enemy Amendment Act of 1916." Although all four steamers were built and registered in the United Kingdom, and the headquarters of Groedel Steamship Company, Ltd. was officially in London, the steamers were Hungarian. The major stockholders were all Hungarian, with only four shares held by Englishmen. The British Admiralty confronted the Groedels because they had requisitioned the ships with the income paid into the British treasury. The Act caused the British to confiscate the fleet, after which the vessels were sold at auction to a British buyer. The eventual purchaser was Mr. Alexander Mair, a well-known shipowner of Glasgow, who, after spirited competition with another gentleman, acquired the vessels for £288,500.

After discussions in the British House of Commons, the now English-owned ships were placed back in the service of the British government. Ironically, all four ships found the sea bottom while in British service as they were torpedoed and sunk by German U-boats.

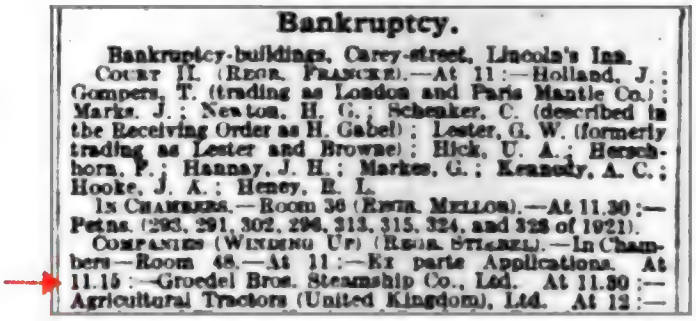
However, the British government owed the Groedels for the leases enacted before the Act that the Trustee was holding. Discussions ensued over giving the Groedels the money as the enemy, of which Hungary was one. A key point un-

der discussion was that the tonnage price had inflated considerably because the Germans were sinking so many ships, so why should the enemy profit from the inflated value of tonnage caused by their sinking?

After the war, Dr. Baron Albert Groedel sued the British for the lease funds held in the Trust but lost as, according to the terms of the Treaty of Trianon, it was determined that he had not been a Hungarian citizen but Polish during the war, claiming to have been living primarily in Skole from November 1918 – July 1921, and was not entitled to compensation. However, in November 1922, Baron Richard was visiting the US when he received word that the British government had reversed its decision, and the family would be fully compensated[72]. The admiralty courts in London would pay the full price of the confiscated vessels, and according to Baron Richard, their compensation would have allowed the family to have purchased 17 similar vessels. The court concluded that the family were Romanian subjects, as the seat of the family had been maintained in Transylvania (within Romania), and therefore nationals of a friendly power. The amount came to several hundred thousand British pounds, although an exact amount was not made public. If we assume conservatively £400,000[73], that would be worth about $32,000,000 in 2025. A great sum to have as the family needed it to invest in rebuilding the business.

Winding Up the Business

As noted above, in 1916, the British government required enemy businesses in England to be "wound up." On April 8, 1921, the company filed for bankruptcy.



Bankruptcy.

Bankruptcy-buildings, Carey-street, Lincoln's Inn.
COURT II. (REGR. FRANCKE).—At 11:—Holland, J.; Gompers, T. (trading as London and Paris Mantle Co.); Marks, J.; Newton, H. G.; Schenker, C. (described in the Receiving Order as H. Gabel); Lester, G. W. (formerly trading as Lester and Browne); Hick, U. A.; Herschhorn, P.; Hannay, J. H.; Markes, G.; Keanedy, A. C.; Hooke, J. A.; Heney, R. L.
IN CHAMBERS.—Room 36 (REGR. MELLOR).—At 11.30:—Petns. (293, 291, 302, 296, 313, 315, 324, and 328 of 1921).
COMPANIES (WINDING UP) (REGR. STIEBEL).—In Chambers—Room 48.—At 11:—Ex parte Applications. At 11.15:—Groedel Bros. Steamship Co., Ltd. At 11.30:—Agricultural Tractors (United Kingdom), Ltd. At 12:—

Clipping 15.
The Times (London)
April 8, 1921 pg4

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[72]*San Francisco Journal and Daily Journal of Commerce; November 12, 1922 – "Accident of War Enriches Austrian Seemingly Ruined"*

[73]*Since the ships were sold at auction for £288,000 in 1916, £400,000 is a reasonable amount 8 years later.*

THE SHIPS

Melanie Groedel; aka - "Melanie"

Figure 109.
Steamer Melanie Groedel

https://www.wrecksite.eu/wreck.aspx?12450

MELANIE 1903
LONDON (ex-MELANIE GROEDEL)

Built as MELANIE GROEDEL for Groedel Brothers Steam Ship Co. Ltd, London; Yard No 668; Launch Date April 11, 1903;

The MELANIE was a 3,002-ton steel hulled British steamship that was registered at the port of London. She had dimensions measuring: 99.16m by length, a 14.35m-beam and a draught of 6.8-metres. William Gray & Co. Ltd. at West Hartlepool built and launched her as the MELANIE GROEDEL in 1903 for Groedel Bros. Steam Ship Co. Ltd. of London. Her single, originally bronze propeller was powered by a 3-cylinder triple expansion steam engine that developed 276 nhp using two 2SB 6CF boilers. She had cylinder dimensions measuring: 60.96cm, 96.52cm & 162.56cm with a 106.68cm stroke (24in., 38in. & 64-inches withs 42-inch stroke). Central Marine Engine Works at West Hartlepool manufactured the machinery. She had one deck and a superstructure consisting of a 20.12m-bridgedeck and a 10.36m-forecastle. The vessel was also armed for defense with a stern-mounted deck gun that fired 10.2cm shells (4-inch). The vessel was equipped with a large stern-positioned emergency iron steering helm. In 1915, the Groedels renamed the vessel MELANIE.

The Melanie was acquired in 1917 by the firm Alexander and Mair at Glasgow after the British Gov't commandeered and sold her at auction as an enemy vessel. On June 16, 1918, the Melanie was sunk in the North Sea by a torpedo fired from a German submarine of the Kaiserliche Deutsche Marine, the UC-40, led

by Captain Hermann Menzel. Five men were lost. The ship was carrying a cargo of coal and was sunk five miles S.E. of Whitby while on a voyage from Blyth to Blaye. UC-40's Capitan Menzel eventually became the head of the German naval intelligence section during WWII. In July 1991, the wreck of the Melanie was found by the late Carl Racey[3], identified by her bell, which is on display in England at the Scarborough Sub-Aqua Club.

Figure 110.
Bell of The Melanie Groedel

Recovered in 1993 by Chris Robinson of Scarborough Sub-Aqua Club diving

Here is her story:

The MELANIE was on Government service, making 7 knots and following a swept channel in a convoy of 17 with 4 escort vessels, two on the starboard side astern and two on the port side. A pilot and 1st mate were on the bridge and a lookout in the crow's nest when, at 9.55 p.m., a dull heavy shock was felt, and a column of water and coal dust was thrown up to about 70 feet. The ship commenced to settle by the head and list to starboard, having been hit on the bluff of the starboard bow, some 17 or 18 feet down.

The lifeboat was being lowered by the mate and some hands when owing to after fall jambing, the forward fall unhooked and the boat capsized, throwing occupants into the water (12 in number) of which six are missing (including the pilot who had left the ship early). An unknown trawler picked up seven of those capsized. The Master tried to reverse the engines to take way off, but they were not moved, the engine room having been vacated. The Master attempted to ascertain the damage but could not see owing to fore part of ship being submerged. The helm had been put hard-a-starboard and whistle sounded 2 shorts blasts, to show following vessels what action was being taken, along with the sending of two S.O.S. signals from the ship's wireless.

As it was found, ship could not be saved; she was eventually abandoned just prior to her foundering at 10.20 p.m. It would appear that too great haste was used in attempting to lower the port lifeboat, which unfortunately had fatal results. The lifeboat capsized and three men drowned. The three dead bodies recovered having being landed at Scarborough. The rest of the survivors were picked up by the escort vessel H.M.T. JOHN FITZGERALD and later landed at Immingham. All the ship's confidential books and papers were placed in a weighted bag and thrown overboard. No submarine was sighted at any time. The ship sank after 50 minutes at 10:20 pm. There were 33 crew members with six lost and three wounded.

More information is available at https://www.wrecksite.eu/wreck.aspx?143682

Dive Notes for the Melanie

"A large wreck which had been dived a number of times before the ship's bell was found in July '91 to confirm the identity. The vessel lies on even keel and is well broken up. There is a very large triple expansion engine with two boilers amidships, which is the highest part of wreck. This site is still a interesting dive and plenty to rummage at, especially in times of good viz. The tide can be a little strange around here in respect of slack been a bit on the short side, and on big tides there is no slack water at all, it just changes direction."

In 2010, I emailed Carl Racey to discuss the wreck and see what other artifacts might have been found or other information he could provide. Here is his answer:

——

On February 12, 2010 4:02 PM, CARL RACEY wrote:

"Hello Jerry,

Thank you for your email, its good to know when people get something out of what we do.

As it turns out, I was with Chris Robinson, the finder of the ship's bell, as a second-year novice diver, diving well over my qualifications at the time, but with a very experienced buddy. This was the first time I had seen a bell found on a shipwreck and it impressed on me very deeply. The visibility was good at the time and the bell was on the seabed, just off the wreck, as it had been on a mast which had fallen over to one side

Chris was leading the dive and he had spotted the bell in the middle distance. It wasn't until I was much closer to it that I knew what it was and I watched in amazement as Chris tied a rope to the bell that lead back to the boat above. When we were all back in the boat the bell was hauled up to the surface, to great relieve of all. After much cleaning and polishing, the bell was put on permanent display at our members clubhouse in Scarborough's Old Town, close to the harbour.

I will look into what else I have on the about the ship, loss and wreck. I know of a few other artefacts recovered I will ask about if anyone is willing to part anything. I have a brass porthole and an gimbled oil lamp, with a dolphin type bracket. I know Chris has plans of the vessel. I only found the photograph of the Melanie very recently.

I do have to tell you that in 2001 a visiting diver died and was lost on the wreck, his body was never found. There was a few failed attempts by the police divers to investigate the wreck, the depth on 165 feet was just beyond their limit and they only got

to the top of the engines. The wreck was left and undived until 2009 when a team, including Chris, visited the site to determine her status. Four pairs of divers covered the most of the wreck in good conditions and nothing untoward was found.

best regards

Carl Racey (Scarborough Sub-Aqua Club & wrecksite partner)

PS I have attached some pictures (pdf flies) of an artefact night (2006) in the club-house, the Melanie bell in on the chimney breast. The oil lamp in the alcove with a few more, most what I have recovered and restored."

Melanie Groedel.—On April 11th Messrs. Wm. Gray & Co. Limited, launched the handsome steel screw steamer *Melanie Groedel*, for the Groedel Brothers Steamship Company, Limited, of London and Budapest. She will take the highest class in Lloyds, and is of the following dimensions, viz.:—Length, overall, 336 ft.; breadth, 47 ft.; and depth, 24 ft. 10 in., with long bridge, hood, and topgallant forecastle. The saloon, state-rooms, captain's, officers', engineers' rooms, &c., will be fitted up in houses on the bridge-deck, and the crew's berths in the forecastle. The hull is built with deep frames, cellular double bottom, and aft-peak ballast tank, eleven steam winches, steam steering gear amidships, hand-screw gear aft, patent direct steam windlass, large marine-type donkey boiler, shifting boards throughout, stockless anchors, telescopic masts with fore and aft rig, boats on beams overhead, and a very complete outfit for a first-class cargo steamer. Triple-expansion engines are being supplied by Messrs. The Central Marine Engine Works of the builders, having cylinders 24 in., 38 in., and 64 in. diameter, with a piston stroke of 42 in., and two large steel boilers for a working pressure of 180 lb. per square inch. The ship and machinery have been built under the superintendence of Mr. John Crookston, of London, on behalf of the owners, and the ceremony of naming the steamer *Melanie Groedel* was gracefully performed by Miss Connie Smyth, Waverley, West Hartlepool.

Melanie Groedel.—On May 20th the handsome steel screw steamer *Melanie Groedel*, built by Messrs. William Gray & Co., Limited, for the Groedel Brothers Steamship Company, Limited, of London and Buda-Pesth (of which we gave particulars in our May issue, page 70), was taken to sea for her trial trip. The performance of both ship and machinery was entirely satisfactory, the average speed being 11 knots, light ship.

The Gisella Groedel - aka "Gisella"

https://www.wrecksite.eu/wreck.aspx?10540

History: by Jan Lettens 24/10/2010: SS Gisella, built by Gray William & Co. in 1904 and owned at the time of her loss by Alexander & Mair, Glasgow, was a steamer of 2502 tons.

Figure 111.
Steamer Gisella Groedel

Figure 112.
The Gisella Groedel with lost Rudder

Figure 113.
The Gisella with temporary repairs

In November, 1907, the Gisella Groedel was caught in a heavy gale and ran aground near Sulina, Romania, a port along the Black Sea. A half-dozen other ships were also caught in the gale in which they were either lost or stranded. Fortunately for the Gisella, she was repairable. During the next 14 days, she remained stranded ashore, subject to the heavy weather. After her load was lightened, she was floated with only the loss of her stern frame and rudder. She was then towed to Galatz, about 80 miles, for temporary repairs. At Galatz, she was placed on a pontoon and the temporary repairs completed. She was then loaded with grain for Rotterdam and after she was discharged, sailed to Barry, England, for permanent repairs.

On April 17, 1917, off NW Scotland, the Gisella hit a mine laid down by U-80, led by Kapitänleutnant Alfred von Glasenapp, and was damaged but repairable with one life lost. She was east of the Island of Lewis at 57° 59'N, 6° 22'W. She was sailing from Coniff.

Seven months later, on November 18th, Gisella, on a voyage from Cardiff with a cargo of coal, and listed as a Admiralty collier, was torpedoed without warning by the German submarine UC-77 led by Kapitänleutnant Reinhard von Rabenau, 2 miles SWxS of Skokham Island, Pembrokeshire. Two lives were lost.

Gisella Groedel.—On February 18th Messrs. William Gray & Co., Limited, launched the handsome steel screw steamer *Gisella Groedel*, for Messrs. The Groedel Brothers Steamship Company, Limited, of London and Budapest. She will take the highest class in Lloyds, and is of the following dimensions, viz.:—Length, overall, 324 ft.; breadth, 44 ft. 3 in.; and depth, 25 ft. 1 in.; with long bridge, poop, and top-gallant forecastle. The saloon, state-rooms, captain's, officers', engineers' rooms, &c., will be fitted up in houses on the bridge deck, and the crew's berths in the forecastle. The hull is built with deep bulb-angle frames, cellular double bottom, fore-peak and aft-peak ballast tanks, nine steam winches, steam steering gear amidships, hand screw gear aft, patent direct steam windlass, large marine-type donkey boiler, shifting boards throughout, stockless anchors, telescopic masts with fore and aft rig, boats on beams overhead, electric light throughout, and a complete outfit for a first-class cargo steamer. Triple-expansion engines are being supplied by the Central Marine Engine Works of the builders, having cylinders 23 in., 36½ in., and 62 in. diameter, with a piston stroke of 39 in., and two large steel boilers for a working pressure of 180 lb. per square inch. The ship and machinery have been built under the superintendence of Mr. John Crookston, of London, on behalf of the owners, and the ceremony of naming the steamer *Gisella Groedel* was gracefully performed by Miss Smith, daughter of Mr. B. Arnold Smith, of Hendon, London.

The Margit Groedel - aka "Margit"

Margit, built by W. Gray & Co. Ltd., West Hartlepool in 1903 and owned at the time of her loss by Alexander & Mair, Glasgow, was a British steamer of 2490 tons.

On April 4th, 1917, Margit, on a voyage from Malta with general cargo, was sunk by the German submarine U-63 led by (Otto Schultze), 80 miles SW1/2W from Cape Matapan. There were no casualties.

Figure 114.
Steamer Margit Groedel

https://www.wrecksite.eu/wreck.aspx?31875

Ludwig Groedel - aka "Milly"

Ludwig Groedel was a 2,964 GRT steam cargo ship completed in April 1904 by W. Gray & Co. Ltd. for Groedel Bros Steamship Co. Ltd. She measured 325ft in length by 47ft.1in and the single screw was powered by a 276hp, 3-cylinder triple expansion steam engine that used two boilers and gave 11-knots. In 1914 the owners renamed her MILLY.

In 1916 she was sold to SS. "Elmgrove" Co., Ltd., London (Glasgow) and managed by Alexander & Mair. The MILLY was armed for defense around 1916.

She was en route from Brest to Barry Roads in ballast when she was torpedoed and sunk by UB-87, on 6 September 1918, just 2¼ miles W ¾ S of Tintagel Head, North Cornwall and 5-miles NW from Camelford at 50.39.N 05.15W. Two men were lost.

Her story:

The MILLY was sailing alone and proceeding on a zigzag course at 10-knots when a torpedo was sighted when only 100 yards away. The submarine had never surfaced at any time. The attack took place at 1355hrs and the torpedo struck on the port side level with No.3 hold which sank her in just five minutes. Two boats were launched, but men in the aft part of the ship found themselves in the sea since the stern went down very rapidly. Two men drowned but the survivors of the 33 crew were picked up by the SS MADAME BROOKE about 15 minutes later and were landed at Swansea. The MILLY was a non-commissioned ship on Admiralty service. The ship's code books were thrown overboard.

Figure 115.
Gun from the Steamer Milly

The wreck lies in general least depth of 45m. Her gun was salvaged In August 1991 and is on display in Port Isaac (https://www.greatwarforum.org/topic/140167-shell-from-the-ship-ss-luis-sunk-off-iow/)

Ludwig Groedel - a general history

http://hhtandn.org/notes/1920/ludwig-groedel-a-general-history

Lloyd's List, Tuesday, May 3rd, 1904:

TRIAL TRIP. LUDWIG GROEDEL.—On April 28 the handsome steel screw steamer Ludwig Groedel, built by Messrs. Wm. Gray and Co. (Limited), of West Hartlepool, for the Groedel Bros. Steamship Company (Limited), of London and Budapest, had her trial trip. The vessel is 336 feet long. 47 feet broad, and 24 feet 10 inches deep, and she has been built to Lloyd's highest class. She has long bridge, poop, and topgallant forecastle. The saloon, state-rooms, captain's, officers' and engineers' rooms, etc., have been fitted up in houses on the bridge deck, and the crew's berths in the forecastle. The hull is built with deep frames, dispensing with hold beams, and leaving large clear holds, cellular double bottom, and fore-and-aft peak ballast tanks. Eleven steam winches, steam steering gear amidships, hand screw gear aft, patent direct steam windlass, large marine type donkey boiler, shifting boards throughout, stockless anchors, telescopic masts with fore and aft rig, boats on beams overhead, electric light throughout, and a very complete outfit for a first-class cargo steamer have been fitted. The engines have been supplied from the marine engine works of the builders, and have cylinders 24, 38 and 61 inches in diameter, with a piston stroke of 42 inches, together with two large steel boilers adapted to work at a pressure of 180 lb. per square inch. After adjustment of compasses, the engines were opened out for a full speed trial, the average speed as indicated by the log being 11 knots. The owners were represented by Mr. B. A. Smith and Mr. John Crookston, of London, the shipbuilders by Captain J. E. Murrell, and the engineers by Mr. Wm. Reynard. The trial was a successful one and was completed to the entire satisfaction of all concerned.

London Evening Standard, Thursday, March 9th, 1905:

FATALITY ON A BRITISH STEAMER. CONSTANTINOPLE. March 7.

Melancholy news is brought by the steamer Ludwig Groedel, which arrived here yesterday from Costanza. Her master, Captain Peirson, after leaving the port, gave some orders and retired to his cabin, but was never seen again. It is supposed that, before going to his berth, he went on deck, as usual, to see if the sluices were clear, and slipped overboard when standing on piece of timber which bore traces of footsteps. His coat and waistcoat were found hanging in his cabin.

It was not suspected, till next morning, that an accident had occurred. Captain Peirson was a middle-aged man, steady, sober, and much respected by all who knew him. He was to have been married on his return from this voyage.

The Ludwig Groedel is a vessel of 750 tons, owned by the Groedel Bros. Steamship Company (Limited), of London. She left Sulina (Black Sea) on the 22nd ult., for Rotterdam, laden with timber, and the cargo was so heavy that, besides filling the holds, it was stacked to height of 18 feet on the decks.

PHILANTHROPY AND NOBILITY

With such extreme wealth as the Groedels had accumulated, they frequently donated to various groups and organizations. They also gave money to their favorite politicians, as ones in their position would naturally tend to do to curry favor. Additionally, Hermann donated or loaned money to the government to assist with funding during WWI.

Political enemies and critics conveniently overlooked the family's significant philanthropy.

In 1897, Hermann had set up a "thousand-bed foundation" for the county Orphanage House in Háromszék county (Covasna/Kommando), of which he entrusted the management of the fund to the county. He stipulated that the fund and any interest would be to "provide for the maintenance of a bed, regardless of the origin of an orphan. In the event of the termination of the orphanage, the county could only use the fund for a similar purpose." What's interesting about this donation and its apparent size is that the orphanage was created by Háromszék County Chief Josef Potsa, who had significant influence over county resources and laws. In an article critical of Hermann, Arpad Zigány claims that Chief Potsa was an investor in the Groedel business, so there was an appearance of quid-pro-quo or at least a conflict of interest on the part of Potsa.

In 1903, the company donated 100,000 gold crowns (about $1,859,000 in 2024) for the Cluj Institute for the Blind. For this, the company was allowed exclusive rights to harvest throughout Transylvania[74].

Egyenlőség, July 31, 1904

- Ministerial thanks. A m. kir. The Minister of Religion and Public Education and the residents of Budapest, thanked Albert and Bernát Groedel for their noble light in setting up a foundation of one hundred thousand crowns for the Institute for the Blind in Cluj-Napoca. This new evidence of Jewish charity and noble spirituality once again adds to the number of large-scale foundations established by the Groedel brothers, especially in the rural Ruthenian countryside, with a tendency to

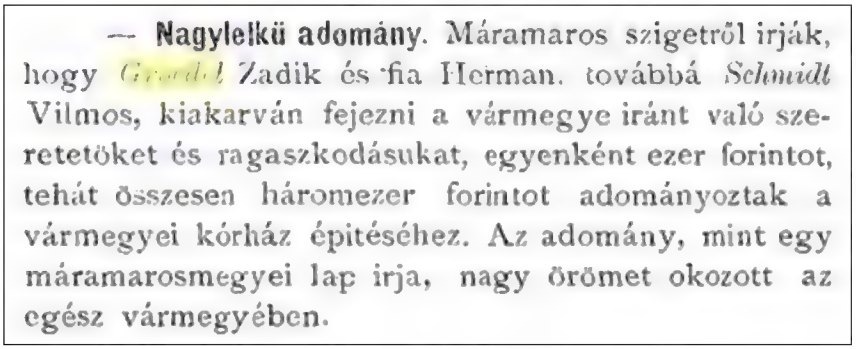
[74] *https://erdelyivakiskola.org/magyar-a-vakok-kolozsvari-allamilag-segelyezett-orszagos-intezete*

Hungarianization.

[This shows that the Groedels were generous even before they attained the title of Baron.]

A Romanian article from Universul, published the following on March 11, 1904:

We read in the Viennese and Budapest newspapers that the Groedel de Gyulafalva brothers, big industrialists from Transylvania and shareholders of the Romanian company for the forestry industry, who last June deposited in the hands of Her Majesty the Queen of Romania the sum of 55,000 lei[75] *for the establishment of an asylum for the blind, have also donated in Hungary for the same purpose the sum of 100,000 crowns. The Prime Minister of Hungary, Count Tisza, decided that the institute for the blind, which will bear the name of Mr. Groedel, will be established in Cluj, in Transylvania.*



— **Nagylelkü adomány.** Máramaros szigetről irják, hogy *Groedl* Zadik és fia Herman, továbbá *Schmidt* Vilmos, kiakarván fejezni a vármegye iránt való szeretetöket és ragaszkodásukat, egyenként ezer forintot, tehát összesen háromezer forintot adományoztak a vármegyei kórház épitéséhez. Az adomány, mint egy máramarosmegyei lap irja, nagy örömet okozott az egész vármegyében.

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Egyenlőség, 16 December 1888

Generous donation. It is written about Maramures Island that Zadik Groedel and his son Herman, as well as Vilmos Schmidt, wished to express their love and affection for the county, so a total of three thousand forints was donated to construct the county hospital. The donation, as a Maramures County newspaper reports, caused great joy throughout the county.

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Egyenlőség, 3 November 1901

Thank you, Minister. The Minister of Religion and Public Education expressed his sincere appreciation and gratitude to the Groedel brothers, a timber trading company in Máramaros Island, which had erected a school building in Sziget-Kamarás, with all its equipment.

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[75] *About $1.4M in 2024*

Illustrierte Kronen Zeitung
August 4, 1915

"Donation from Dante on the occasion of the recapture of Galician estates. We have received the following information from a special source: Archduchess Zita has granted the lord of the so hotly contested estate of Skole, Baron Hermann von Groedel and Baroness von Groedel, permission to name the hospital train they intend to donate on the occasion of the liberation of Skole from Russian oppression the 'Zita Hospital Train'. This meaningful gesture of gratitude for the heroic deeds of our incomparable troops will soon be handed over to its intended purpose in Vienna and will serve as eloquent testimony to the great joy evoked in its owners by the recovery of the estate despite devastation, looting, and robbery."

October 6, 1915

(The inauguration of the Zita Hospital Train.) As reported, Baron and Baroness Hermann von Groedel, landowners at Skole in Galicia, have made a truly princely donation to the war effort by placing a "hospital train" consisting of twenty-four wagons at its disposal. Archduchess Zita has permitted the hospital train to be called the "Zita Hospital Train." Yesterday afternoon the train was inaugurated in the presence of the namesake and a number of prominent personalities at the western railway stations.

Pester Lloyd
June 6, 1917

Barons Hermann, Bernhard and Dr. Albert Groedel have so far subscribed to the sixth Hungarian war bond k 2,550,000, and to the Austrian war bond k 2,450,000. The total subscriptions of the Groedel barons to the war bonds to date thus amount to around 20 million crowns (about $3,721,000 in 2024).

NOBILITY

New Nobles

Vasárnapi Ujság, Budapest, June 28, 1903, Page 430

New Hungarian nobles. The Wednesday issue of the official gazette announces that Ármin Groedel, Bernát Groedel and Albert Groedel from Maramures, as well as their legal successors in recognition of their merits in the field of charity, will be awarded free of charge to Hungarian wholesalers. The Groedel Brothers, even Ármin Groedel, live in Budapest, Bernát Groedel is an engineer, lives in Brasov and Albert Groedel is a jurist, lives in Vienna, the bosses of the Groedel Brothers on M. Island and Demnia Wyzna, and the Transylvanian forest industry. co. directors from Friedberg, Hesse. Their father, who died in 1896. In Régensburg he was a timber wholesaler; from here he migrated to Maramures and here in 1874 he entered into a contractual relationship with the treasury, and this agreement served as the basis for the formation of the Groedel Brothers company. And the large-scale timber store, intended purely for export purposes, opened the way for the Hungarian timber industry abroad. In 1894, the Groedel Brothers took over the Transylvanian Forest Industry Limited Liability Company. This company alone employs about 6,000 workers; in addition to being co-owners of the Skole estate, this 67,000-acre estate also employs 6,000 people in eastern Galicia. Wherever the Groedel Brothers set up a settlement, their first concern is to build flats for the workers and schools for the children of the workers, and they usually do a lot of charity.

http://www.epa.hu/00000/00030/02581/pdf/VU_EPA00030_1903_26.pdf

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Független Magyarorsag (Independent Hungary)

June 26, 1903

Donation of nobility. As we mention elsewhere in our magazine, His Majesty the King granted the Hungarian hereditary nobility to the Groedel Brothers industrialists free of charge. The Groedel Brothers, also Groedel Ármin, living in Budapest, Groedel Bernát, engineer, living in Brasov and Groedel Albert, law professor, living in Vienna, are the heads of the Groedel Brothers' companies in M.-sziget and Dem-

nia-Wyzna, and co-managers of the Transylvanian forest industry, from Friedberg in Hesse. Their father, who died in 1896, was a timber wholesaler in Regensburg; from there he emigrated to Máramaros-Sziget and here in 1874 he entered into a contract with the Treasury, which served as the basis for the formation of the Groedel Brothers' Company. This large-scale timber business, intended purely for export purposes, opened the way for the Hungarian timber industry abroad. The Groedel Brothers took over the Transylvanian Forest Industry Joint Stock Company in 1894. In this company alone they employ about 6,000 workers; in addition, as co-owners of the Skole estate, they also employ 6,000 people on this 67,000-acre estate in eastern Galicia - The products of the Transylvanian Forest Industry Co. have for some years been making their way abroad almost exclusively by sea, on their own steamships built for this purpose. Wherever the Groedel Brothers establish a colony, their first concern is to build housing for the workers and schools for the children of the workers, and in general they give an undoubted sign of their philanthropic and charitable feelings at all times as evidenced by the fair transfer of the school building in Körösmeze to the Jewish Hungarian public fund.

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NOBILITY: TO BE, OR NOT TO BE, JEWISH

When the family received the barony, there was some controversy. The Jewish community was justifiably proud as the Groedels were only the third or fifth Jewish family to receive the title, depending on how one considers being Jewish (in a letter to his cousin Hermann Nussbaum, Hermann claimed to be the fifth Jewish family in Hungary to receive the barony; a Jewish-leaning newspaper claimed they were the third. In his letter, Hermann listed the previous four). But due to several family members having converted, at the time neither Hermann, Bernhard or Albert being one of them (just a few of Hermann's children and possibly Melanie), a second newspaper complained they were no longer Jewish, and a third newspaper pointed out that one newspaper claimed the Groedels were Jewish and that another claimed they weren't.

Egyenlőség (Equality) September 17, 1905

–New barons. In recognition of their merits in the field of industry and charity, His Majesty the King has conferred the Hungarian baronetcy on Ármin Groedel, Bernát Groedel and Albert Groedel in Gyulafalvi, and their legal successors, with the name

of Bogdan, while keeping their first names of Gyulafalvi intact. One of the members of the firm, Baron Armin Groedel, is the son-in-law of Adolf Weiner, one of the heads of the large industrial firm Weiner and Grünbaum in Budapest. The new barons were of great service to the Hungarian economy in the forestry and timber industry and were significant figures in foreign trade. In the field of charity, they were notorious for their generosity. One of the company members has just recently made a major donation of 100,000 crowns to the deaf and blind institute in Cluj. They employ a large number of workers, who see their bosses as their fatherly benefactors. Together with the Groedels, there are now three Jewish families in Hungary who have been granted barony, namely the Herczogs of Chiet, the Gutmanns of Gels and the Groedels of Gyulafalvi. The Schossberger family, which was the first to receive the Hungarian barony, has, as far as we know, no Jewish male members.

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Alkotmány [Constitution] September 17, 1905

New Jewish barons. Today's issue of the official newspaper states that the king awarded the large landowners and wholesalers Ármin Groedel of Gyulafalvi, Bernát Groedel of Gyulafalvi and Albert Groedel of Gyulafalvi, as well as their legal successors, in recognition of their merits in the fields of industry and charity, the Hungarian baronial dignity, in addition to keeping their first name of Gyulafalvi intact, the name "Bogdáni" was added.

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Alkotmány,: September 19, 1905 [this newspaper was considered a conservative Christian paper, and after 1896 it was the first truly political Catholic paper.]

(Yet they are Jews.) The latest barons, the Groedels, whom the Pesti Napló ridicules and claims are no longer Jews. They still are: as the official Jewish newspaper, "Equality", proves, writing with great pride: "Together with the Groedels, there are now three baronized Jewish families in Hungary, and they are the "Chiet" Herzogs, the "Gelse" Grimanns and the "Gyulafalvi" "Groedels." The Schossberger family, which was the first to receive the Hungarian barony, has, as far as we know, no Jewish male members".

The newest "Hungarian" nobleman is also a Jew, about whom the "Equality" also writes: "Albert Vécsey, the director of the Transylvanian forestry joint-stock com-

pany, and his legal successors, were elevated by His Majesty the King to the rank of Hungarian nobles with the first name of Fenyves in recognition of their merits in the field of trade. The new nobleman, who, by vocation, had also performed valuable economic activities in the now-damaged[76] *Groedel brothers' firm, is the son of Adolf Weiner, a member of the well-known Budapest firm of Grünbaum and Weiner. Mr Vécsey Fenyvesi is therefore more like Weiner*[77].

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In the following article by the Pesti Naplo, the journalist conveniently ignores the fact that the Groedels pressed the government to build-out the internal rail system to transport goods throughout the empire and to the ports for export, and to pay for transporting the majority of exported lumber over those same rail systems – as well as building out their own rail infrastructure through the mountain passes – all of benefit to the local populace. Claiming in the article not to have heard their names associated with institutions is unlikely as there are many newspaper articles beginning in the 1880s with stories about the family's extensive donations, as noted previously, such as their endowment of nearly $2 million (2024 dollars) for the Cluj Institute for the Blind. In addition, the newspaper, Egyenlőség, noted the contradictory statement: "***In the field of charity, they were notorious for their generosity.***" So, they were either "***notorious for their generosity***" or "***unheard of"*** for their charity practice as the Pesti Naplo submits in the article below; it can't be both.

Pesti Naplo
September 17, 1905

New barons, new nobles. Géza Báró Fejér raised three big entrepreneurs, Bernát Groedel, Ármin Groedel and Albert Groedel, to his rank and ennobled their brother-in-law, Artur Vécsey (Weiner), who manages their wood industry company. We thought that the list of the Kuffners, Herzogs and Orosdiias had already ended and that Count István Tisza's election fund no longer needed more business barons and nobles. The fact that Baron Géza Fejérváry has now presented three new barons and

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[76] *It's not clear why the author considers the Groedel Brothers business "now-damaged," but we can tell from the rest of the paragraph the author was not a fan of the Groedels.*

[77] *There are several errors; Arthur, not Albert was a director, and Hermann was the son-in-law of Adolf Weiner.*

a new nobleman to the country at the same time means either that they have started taking care of the election fund again, or that they are continuing to fulfill their old obligations. But it is certain that the government's need can be very great if they are already with the Groedels when it comes to baronization. However, the slogan has become very mercantile even around the baronizations: quantity is the main thing, quality is secondary! Money sometimes has the smell of it, and if they had gone back to Máramarossziget to research the noble antecedents, perhaps the number of Hungarian barons would have increased, so someone transported a lot of wood on the Hungarian State Railways, that is not an unqualified merit, because there are others who used the State Railways and they also paid the fare for the entire amount of wood delivered. It is also not worth it that someone had to make wood deals with the Hungarian government, from which they made millions - not the state. In addition to today's system, the fact that the new barons can't even speak Hungarian, not to mention that the natives of the country don't speak it, is definitely one of the Faiz's merits. But where one feels good, one is happy to be a citizen. Especially if the governors love him so much that one of them, that of Tiszá[78], makes him a "noble from Ujfalv" this January, and the other, that of Fejérváry, outbids Tisza and makes him a baron and even a "noble from Bogdán". But what are the merits of this family from Máramarosziget? Because until now we have not even heard their names in connection with institutions, movements and businesses that were related to Hungarian culture and public education, and we have not even heard of the usual "charity" practice. On the contrary, we remember the very bad reputation of this name, when, not so long ago, a court also dealt with it. Aldcor seems to have fallen under the name of the Groedels, which will now be gilded by the half-yearly "Ujfalvi" and the twenty-four-hour "Bogdán" nickname. And to make the family joy complete, the brother-in-law also gets a little "Fenyves" nobility. The Groedels could hardly have migrated to a better country than Hungary! Their brush was great. They realized that here a lot of money is needed for "public purposes" and that nowhere does the laurel fall more abundantly on the heads of the deserving than here. Three nobility and three baronies for one company, well that's enough! The devil thought about this old general that he was such a democrat. Now we even believe him that he really is a fan of social democracy! And lest someone accuse us of anti-Semitism: the Groedels are no longer Jews![79]...

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[78] *Prime Minister*

[79] *Hermann and Berhnard didn't convert until 14 years later in 1919. Albert never converted.*

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Pester Lloyd, August 12, 1914

A Donation.

The German Consul General, Count Furstenberg-Stammheim has received a donation of three thousand crowns from Baron Hermann Groedel for the support fund of the living Germans of the Reich, accompanied by the corresponding letter:

Your Reverence,

I sincerely ask you to allow me to present my donation to the support fund of the Reich Germans living here.

I confess that I am not only motivated to do this by the desire to contribute where it is needed, since I am happy to have the opportunity to do so elsewhere and in various areas, but above all by the deep and unchanging affinity that connects me most intimately with everything that is German, that speaks German, and that soothes German. If I have already thought with special pride of my Hessian origin, even after the long period of time in which I have enjoyed the

honor of Hungarian citizenship, how much more so is this the case in these days, in which I have looked at the faithful brotherhood between the two states with an emotion shared by the pride of the former and the admiration of the new homeland, but doubled by warm inwardness.

Thus, I have the self-evidence of the gift, which I ask Your Highness to give to his purpose in the conviction that the loyalty of the Federation does not know any differences even in the international field of charity.

Mr. Consul General, I would like to approve the assurance of excellent esteem with which I have the honor to sign

Your Highness, Baron Hermann Groedel.

SECTION 5:

GROEDEL FAMILY STORIES

ARTHUR (1887-1917)

Figure 116.
Baron Arthur Groedel
(1887 – 1916)

Hermann and Melanie's second son, Arthur, was smart, well-educated in business affairs, multilingual, politically savvy, a war hero and the family heir apparent, although fate saw to it otherwise.

As a child, Arthur participated in children's puzzle contests in newspapers. Alongside his siblings and his cousin, Dóra (Bernhard's daughter), he was a member of the Budapest Skating Association. Living on Lendvay ut in Budapest, the family enjoyed convenient access to the outdoor ice-skating rink directly across the street in Városliget (City Park).

At age 11, Arthur was an average student at the Merciful Teacher's Order, a Greek Catholic gymnasium in Máramarossziget. The school's records noted his religion as "Reformed, according to the gospel." The student body comprised 79 Roman Catholic students, 63 Greek Catholic, 14 Jewish, and only 4 students identified as Reformed.

After relocating to Budapest around 1901, Arthur attended the Budapest Academy of Commerce (now known as the Budapest Business School) from approximately ages 12 to 16.

No records have been found documenting Arthur's activities between 1906 and 1910, though it is presumed he attended university during that period.

In 1912, when Arthur was 25, his father established three new companies in Basel and Glarus, Switzerland: Internationale Holding Company Ltd, Columbia Trust Company Ltd, and Internationale Trust Company Ltd. According to their articles of association, all three companies intended to conduct standard banking operations. Specifically, the Holding Company focused on forest harvesting, while the other two entities managed assets. Arthur was the sole board member of Columbia Trust Company Ltd; the Holding Company's board included Arthur, Bernhard, and Hermann, whereas Internationale Trust Company Ltd in Glarus listed only Arthur and Hermann as board members. Notably absent from these organizations was Hermann's brother, Baron Dr. Albert. This highlights Hermann's considerable trust in Arthur's financial capabili-

ties, especially significant given Hermann's policy of not allowing his children into the family business until they were at least 22 years old.[80]

Arthur found the Pacific Northwest region of both the United States and Canada particularly appealing. In December 1911, he wrote a brief letter to the industry magazine "The Timberman," mentioning his planned visit to Vancouver in the spring, including stops in the US along his journey. His letter was published in February 1912:

An Austrian Visitor.

Budapest, Austria, Dec. 22, 1911.

The Timberman: The purpose of my today's letter is to inform you that I have the intention of coming over to Vancouver, B. C. next Spring, and shall be very pleased to see you on my journey through America, a land I am greatly charmed with. Prior to my arrival a cousin of mine, Mr. Egon Ulrich, from Augsburg, Germany, will go over there, to make preliminary studies. I should feel much obliged to you for any assistance you may be kind enough to render him in learning the circumstances of your country. ARTHUR GROEDEL.

As noted in his 1912 letter, Arthur had enlisted in the Hungarian reserves and traveled to the United States and Canada that same year. While on the West Coast of America, Arthur received a telegram from his brother Richard, alerting him to rising tensions and advising preparation for war in the Balkans. Responding promptly, Arthur departed from San Francisco, where he had been visiting American lumber manufacturers, traveling swiftly to New York. From there, he boarded a steamer to England and ultimately returned to Budapest. However, no further details about his military service, if any occurred, have been discovered.

Political Appointment

Hermann, who maintained cordial relationships with Emperor Franz Joseph I and Prime Minister István Tisza, may have discussed Arthur's education and skills with them, possibly arranging a meeting. They must have been impressed, as on March 8, 1914, at the age of 27, Franz Joseph I appointed Baron Arthur Groedel as the honorary Hungarian Consul to Vancouver, British Co-

[80] *As he noted in a letter to his cousin, Hermann Nussbaum.*

lumbia. Arthur had first visited Vancouver during a family trip to the United States in 1910 and returned two years later.

Reports suggest that Arthur acquired timber property for the family business somewhere in the Pacific Northwest, leading to speculation that he might eventually relocate there to oversee the acquisition. However, this never materialized, and the fate of the property remains uncertain. Aside from newspaper reports, no other records have been found confirming any property acquisitions in the United States.

While in Vancouver as consul, The Victoria Daily Times published the following about Arthur and his new position:

The Victoria Daily Times: June 22, 1914

Baron Groedel, of Budapest to Represent His Country in This Province

Baron Groedel, the newly-arrived consul for Austria-Hungary in British Columbia, came over from Vancouver yesterday to pay his first official calls at the offices of the heads of the provincial government. He will probably visit both the lieutenant-governor and the premier.

Baron Groedel is a young man and sought the appointment to British Columbia because of his interest in this province, which he visited some three or four years ago[81]*. That was in the winter time and this morning after a day spent in viewing the city and surroundings, he stated that he had previously formed a most imperfect impression of the beauties of this portion of the island.*

...

The new consul is thoroughly familiar with the English tongue and stated that in Hungary now the rich people and the nobility all teach their young men English instead of French. Sons of prominent Hungarian families are sent to Oxford and Cambridge in large numbers and the educated young people of Hungary are well versed in English. This has only been the case for eight or ten years, however, as prior to that French, as the language or diplomacy, was always taught.

Now, however, English being the language of trade, had taken the ascendancy.

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[81]*During 1910 with his parents and sister, Paula. This is the trip when the Groedels visited with their cousins, the Zeisler family, in Brooklyn.*

The Timberman, May 1914, page 44

Egon Ulrich has returned from a three months' European trip, visiting England, France, Germany and Hungary. Mr. Ulrich is a cousin of Baron Arthur de Groedel, of Budapest, Hungary, who has recently been appointed Hungarian Consul for British Columbia. Consul de Groedel's father Is the largest lumber operator in Europe.

The company will cut about 400 million feet this year. This lumber will average about $25 per M. A market is found In Hungary, and along the Rhine and in other sections of the European continent; also in England, where the company have their head office. A number of steamers, owned by Hungarian capital, and flying the English flag, are operated for transporting the lumber. Mr. Ulrich says it Is the intention when the Panama Canal is opened, to dispatch some of their steamers to the Pacific Coast to load lumber.

It is expected the freight to Europe will be about eight or nine dollars per thousand feet, making competition possible with certain grades and sizes. General business conditions in England are good. In Germany, the recent imposition of a $250,000.000 war tax, payable in two years, is having most depressing effect on trade, as this large sum of money Is taken directly out of circulation. The Balkan war left a legacy of death and destruction behind it, which will take a good many years to overcome. ... Consul de Groedel will arrive in British Columbia within a short time, where he will spend a month arranging his offices. Last year he spent several days In Vancouver. His firm is already Interested In several timber limits on Vancouver Island. Mr. Ulrich says when he was abroad, he found copies of The Timberman in Budapest, in several cities in Germany, and In London; and in this way he kept informed of general conditions regarding Pacific Coast lumber trade.

The Timberman, June 1914, page 38

Baron Arthur Groedel, of Budapest, Hungary, recently appointed Austrian-Hungary consul for British Columbia, is now visiting Vancouver, B. C. for a month. He will return to Budapest about the first of July, returning again in September. The Baron expects to make four trips each year to Vancouver, In the interests of the consulate. Baron Groedel is himself an active lumberman. His father Is the largest lumber manufacturer, probably, in Europe, with a manufacturing capacity of about 400,000,000 feet annually. The timber holdings aggregate over 130.000 acres. The Baron states that their lumber business was very much curtailed by reason of the

Balkan war, and prices were very much reduced. The company is operating six mills, but only on 11-hour shifts, due to trade conditions. Common lumber sells about $15 per thousand feet. The company exports some of its higher grade to London and other markets. The opening of the Panama Canal and its effect on the lumber market of Europe is being studied by Baron Groedel. He is of the opinion that only the higher grades of lumber will be able to be successfully exported to Europe, as is now the case with pitch pine and other American and Canadian woods. The question of freights will depend very largely upon the ability of vessels to get full cargoes each way. Baron Groedel's firm has a fleet of six vessels, which it employs in its lumber business, flying the English flag. The company maintains an office In London and has exported some lumber to Argentine and South America, but the returns were not very satisfactory.

"The same conditions surround the lumber business all over the world. There are too many saw mills, said the Baron. "We experience the same troubles that I find in America. We have a stock of lumber on hand at present with a value of over $2,500,000. so we must curtail production. We find the world is each year consuming a larger amount of lumber as boxes, due to the steady increase in commerce. We are operating a box factory in connection with our plants, and will buy some additional box factory machinery on the turn home. The tendency is to a steady increase in this direction. A law was passed two years ago in our country forbidding the use of shingles. The claim was made that it was in the interest of fire prevention.

Baron Groedel first visited the Pacific Coast about five years ago, and this Is his third visit. He is delighted with the country, especially the Pacific Northwest, and hopes to spend each year a large portion of his time. The Baron speaks English very fluently and is an extensive traveler. The Timberman is pleased that the Hungarian government chose for It British Columbia consul a real live lumberman, who will be cordially welcomed wherever he comes in contact with the industry in this country.

Komagata Maru Incident

Under the cover of night on July 19, 1914, Canadian Immigration officials, accompanied by a hastily assembled volunteer militia, launched a midnight assault on the passengers of the Komagata Maru. This event, later coined as "The Great Hindu War" or "The Battle of Burrard Inlet," stands as one of the most iconic chapters in the ship's stay in Vancouver. Despite the clarity of the battle's outcome, the question of who emerged victorious remains shrouded in uncertainty.

Figure 117. Komagata Maru

The Komagata Maru, a Japanese vessel chartered in Hong Kong, carried 376 East Indian passengers from Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Yokohama. Arriving in Vancouver on May 23, 1914, the passengers, including 337 Sikhs, 27 Muslims, and 12 Hindus, all Punjabis and British subjects, faced a divisive fate. While 24 were admitted to Canada, the remainder were denied disembarkation, leaving the ship stranded in the harbor for eight weeks under the watchful eyes of the government.

Amidst the unfolding drama, whispers of a German conspiracy surfaced, implicating Baron Arthur Groedel and his German cousin, Egon Ulrich, in a potential scheme to undermine the British Empire. Arthur, serving as the Austrian consul in Vancouver, found himself entangled in a scheme that hinted at a deeper conspiracy.

The relations between Canada and India, two of the most important parts of the British Empire, have not always been of the happiest. They have pertained very largely, either to immigration (where Canada has felt it necessary to make certain demands of India), or to the status of East Indians in Canada (where the reverse order of demands was made). The most advertised and spectacular incident in Indo-Canadian relations. in fact, probably the most dramatic occurrence in the history of Canadian immigration, was the attempt, in 1914, to

land a party of some four hundred East Indians on board the Komagata Maru, at Vancouver, in the face of Canadian immigration regulations that made their admission illegal. What followed might almost be described as Gilbertian, but there was underneath an element of seriousness, even of danger. The vessel was in the harbor of Vancouver for eight weeks, by the end of which time three riots had occurred, there had been several broken bones, Hindu lives had been very nearly lost, half the Canadian navy (consisting of H.M.C.S. Rainbow) had been called out, together with several detachments of the militia and permanent force, so that, altogether, everyone was very much relieved when finally, the Komagata Maru steamed away.

The motives behind the Komagata Maru expedition eluded understanding initially. Gurdit Singh, the expedition's leader and a wealthy lumber trader[82], was revealed to be associated with the Ghadr movement in America. His primary goal was to exacerbate political unrest in India. While aware of the illegal nature of the venture, Gurdit Singh's strategic move served as a test case challenging Canadian immigration restrictions against Hindus.

The specter of a German conspiracy loomed larger as the vessel's charter through a German agent in Hong Kong fueled suspicions. Denied entry into Canada, most passengers returned to Budge Budge, Calcutta, and faced a tragic confrontation with the Indian Imperial Police, resulting in the deaths of 22 people.

The Komagata Maru, seen by some as a precursor to World War I, led to the arrest, imprisonment, and surveillance of many passengers upon their return to India. Allegations of a German plot persisted, with even Sir Arthur Conan Doyle entertaining the idea. However, as British subjects, the passengers had the right to enter Canada despite immigration laws deeming their admission illegal.

The story unfolded over eight weeks in the Vancouver harbor, marked by three riots, with the constant fear of German influence amid the backdrop of the First World War. Reports suggested German government involvement in arranging the Komagata Maru, linking Gurdit Singh and Arthur Groedel, both lumbermen, to a complex narrative of conspiracy.

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[82] *The first of several coincidences with the Groedels that lead to the conspiracy theory.*

In 1941, Stephen E. Raymer, an official interpreter for the Department of Immigration, shed light on a German-Japanese connection in a letter to historian Robie L. Reid. The letter revealed Arthur's involvement in a dual mission for the Austro-Hungarian Empire, suggesting a calculated effort to create saboteurs among East Indian passengers.

Dear Dr. Reid:

I desire to thank you for your kindness in mailing me a copy of the British Columbia Historical Quarterly of January, 1941, in which there appears your interesting and unbiased article on "The Inside Story of the Komagata Maru." You have, however, not discussed the question as to the German-Japanese part in the episode. Here are some facts on that point. At the time of the arrival of the Komagata Maru, May 23, 1914, I was, and had been for two years, official interpreter for the Department of Immigration at Vancouver, under the late Malcolm J. R. Reid, an officer of that Department. My duties as such were to attend the sittings of the Board of Inquiry when required, and to make investigation in respect to the activities of certain elements, especially of those, who a short time afterwards, became our enemies in the first Great War.

In March 1914 I received information, which I submitted to Mr. Malcolm Reid, that the Germans intended to start a War, which would be swift and short, and that it was expected that the whole affair would be over in six months.

On the 14th of that month, Baron Groedel, the son of a ship-owner, in Braila-Roumania, became the first Consul for the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and as such, had taken an office in the Rogers Building in the City of Vancouver.

As a former citizen of Zagreb in Croatia and conversant with the German language, I had many conversations with him from time to time. In these he (Baron Groedel) told me that he had two missions to carry out here. The first was to recall to Austria as many reservists of that Empire as possible; and, second, to see that a cargo, to be brought from India, was properly discharged here and the cash for the return cargo paid to him because he was the representative of the agency in Calcutta.

To me, at that time, this conversation did not convey much. A few days later, about the middle of April, Baron Groedel left in a hurry, to go to Buda-Pesth, leaving his

nephew[83]*, Egon Ulrich, in charge of the Austrian- Hungarian Consulate.*[84]

When I asked, why the hurry, I was told by Ulrich that something very important would happen in the next few days. On May 21, 1914, a long distance call was put through by Ulrich to Victoria, B.C., and the answer was: "The Hindoo passengers arrived and the ship proceeding to Vancouver." Two days later the Komagata Maru arrived, May 23, 1914.

Mr. Malcolm Reid assigned me, in co-operation with the late Bela Singh, also an employee of the Department, a very delicate job, i.e. to watch Egon Ulrich who was in constant communication with the local East Indians. During various conversations with him, I had no difficulty in ascertaining that Baron Groedel's agents in Calcutta had collected riff-raff and men with criminal records, in Calcutta and elsewhere, who had no personal desire to come to Canada but who were promised everything to go there and be let loose, where they were to act as Saboteurs when the "Big Things," as Ulrich told us, were to happen there.

I was present in Ulrich's office when he spoke to C. Gardner Johnson's office and said "That under no circumstances was the coal to be discharged from the Komagata Maru unless all the passengers were given the right to land."

Other important information that I submitted to Mr. Malcolm Reid was that Ulrich had said to Mr. J. E. Bird, the solicitor for the passengers on the ship, that Hindoos, being subjects of the British Crown had the right to be admitted to any portion of the British Empire, notwithstanding any laws of the Canadian Government, "Irrespective of nationality, creed and colour," were Ulrich's exact words. I also remember another reason given why the passengers should be allowed to land, was that the Empress of Russia (I think it was) arrived in the harbor at about the same time with 500 Chinese who were allowed to land on payment of Head Tax.

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[83]*Egon was Arthur's cousin, not nephew*

[84]*The records of the Department of External Affairs, Ottawa, show that the Department was informed by a dispatch dated April 3, 1914, from the Austro-Hungarian Embassy in London, that it was proposed to create an honorary consulate in Vancouver, and to appoint Arthur Freiherr von Groedel von Gyulafalva und Bogdan as Consul. On the outbreak of war, in August, Egon Ulrich was ordered to leave the country. Shortly afterwards he was paroled, and in May, 1915, he was interned at Vernon, B.C. When examined Ulrich stated that he was a German, not an Austrian.*

To sum up:
1. The German agents in Calcutta and elsewhere, collected these East Indian passengers for no other purpose than to dump [them] in Canada, as willing tools to foster discontent and become willing saboteurs.
2. That the Austro-Hungarian Consul, partner of the Germans, and his nephew who succeeded him in charge of the Consulate, had an interest in the whole affair.
3. If this was an honest endeavor to bring honest-to-goodness subjects of His Britannic Majesty to Canada, why was it that Japan had the only steamer ready for such a purpose, and that through a German shipping agent? We can understand it better today.
4. Why was it that on the return of the Komagata Maru to Japan, the Japanese Government refused to allow any of the passengers to land in Japan?
5. If these passengers, as has been argued, were innocent victims and law- abiding people, why the bloody riots in Calcutta? My suggestion is, that being unable to land in Canada, they, as a last resort, were to make trouble in India and so assist their employers, the German Government.
6. The twenty odd passengers, who had a right to enter Canada, having acquired residence there, were merely a smoke-screen, to give an appearance of bona fides for the rest of them.
Had those 360 East Indians been allowed to land in British Columbia great damage might have been done by them, and great expense caused to the Canadian Government.

Yours truly,

[signed] Stephen E. Raymer

Despite the revelations, Arthur's involvement in the purported conspiracy faded into obscurity as he returned to Europe, voluntarily joining military service at the outbreak of the war.

In 2016, acknowledging the embarrassment caused by the Komagata Maru incident, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau took the unusual step of issuing a formal apology in the House of Commons. The tragic saga serves as a poignant reminder that, historically, Canada was not always a welcoming place for newcomers.

Figure 118.

Lt. Arthur Freiherr Groedel von Gyulafalva and Bogdan

(born Máramarossziget, November 19, 1887,

fell July 5, 1917 in Tschanak, Asia Minor, during an air raid[85])

Down at the Dardanelles

On July 4, 1914, shortly after he heard about the outbreak of the war, Arthur left his posting in Vancouver, BC, as honorary consul to volunteer for military service, and left his cousin, Egon, to handle the affairs. As with other German subjects, Egon Ulrich was eventually imprisoned in a concentration camp in Vernon, British Columbia, Canada, even though he was the chancellor of the consulate.

Washington Staatszeitung (Seattle): May 16, 1915

Egon Ulrich Arrested

Vancouver, BC. May 14

The imprisonment of all Germans and Austrians in concentration camps is making more and more progress and with every news of German victories coming in from Europe and the huge increase in Canadian casualty lists, this confinement becomes a more necessary protection for the Germans still in the country.

Yesterday Mr. Egon Ulrich was arrested here and taken to the concentration camp in Nanaimo[86].

Ulrich is the representative of large timber and land interests here. His cousin, Baron von Groedel, was appointed an Austrian Honorary Consul in Vancouver for a few weeks before the outbreak of the war. Shortly after he took up his post, Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife were murdered in Serajevo, ... Consul Groedel soon had to travel and was not in British Columbia when the war broke out.

Mr. Egon Ulrich then served as the Chancellor of the Consulate and managed its affairs, which the American Consul General took over at the outbreak of war. Despite his position, Mr. Ulrich was exceptionally allowed to remain in British Columbia. However, he, like all the residents here from countries at war with England, is now subject to the same fate.

Although Arthur was a Hungarian fighting with the Austrian army, he was assigned to the Turks, enlisting as a cadet but was soon promoted to the officer rank of ensign with the 36th artillery group, a howitzer battery. He fought at Sedil-Bahr

[85]*Arthur's death is stated incorrectly. He died of heart failure from dysentery.*

[86]*Subsequent Canadian records show he was imprisoned in Vernon, British Columba.*

(Sedd el Bahr/Seddülbahir) battling troops and ships of the Entante (British and French.) Sedil-Bahr is located at the entrance to the Dardanelles Strait. During the months-long battle of Gallipoli, besides Sedil-Bahr, reports note that Arthur also fought at Smyrna (as a coastal defense) and further up the peninsula at Ari Burnu, at the northern tip of the beach famously known as "Anzac Cove," where the Australians and New Zealanders had established their beachhead[87]. Today, Anzac Cove is memorialized each year on "Anzac Day" marking the anniversary of the landing at Gallipoli on April 25, 1915, and for those whose lives there were lost.

For his actions during the battles against the Entente armies, Arthur received several Turkish medals for bravery including the coveted Iron Cross awarded by the German Kaiser, as well as becoming the personal adjutant to Group Commander Josef Martinek from December 1, 1915 to March 25, 1916. Arthur earned another promotion to Lieutenant on August 10, 1916.

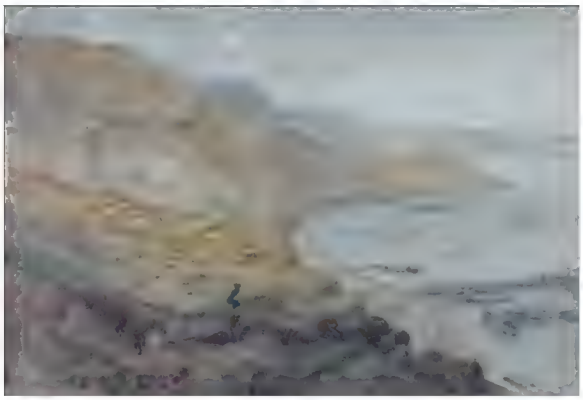

Figure 119. Anzac Cove

Neue Freie Presse, January 14, 1916

The cadet Baron Artur Groedel, who took part with his battery in the battles in Ari Burnu and Anaforta[88] as well as in the last successful attacks in Sedil Bahr, was awarded the Iron Crescent by the Sultan for fine bravery.

Reichspost, March 21, 1916

Triple award. Baron Artur Groedel, who had distinguished himself in the difficult battles at Gallipoli and was awarded the Iron Crescent by the Sultan, again received a high Turkish award, the Liakat Order with the Swords on the Ribbon of Bravery. The young Ensign's actions received particularly honorable recognition when he was recently awarded the Silver Medal for Bravery, First Class.

The Gallipoli Star or Iron Crescent is a military decoration awarded by the Ottoman Empire. It was known as the Ottoman War Medal. It was instituted by Sultan Mehmed V on March 1, 1915, for gallantry in battle.

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[87]*There are conflicting accounts of where the 36th actually fought. Additional research is needed to clarify.*

[88]*"Anaforta" is also known as "Sulva Bay."*

Figure 120.

Iron Crescent and Liakat Medal of Merit respectively

Liyakat Medal of Merit

The Liakat Medal: "Medal of Merit," was a decoration of the Ottoman Empire established in 1890. It was awarded in two classes, gold or silver. Arthur was awarded the silver version.

Arthur's medals:

- Golden Cross of Merit on the ribbon of the Medal of Valor
- Silver medal of Valor II. (Division I.)
- Knight of the Iron Cross (February 16, 1917)
- Imperial Ottoman Liakat Medal of Merit
- Iron Crescent

The silver case pictured below[89] (Figure 121), is a keepsake that Baron Arthur had engraved in remembrance of the battle of the Dardanelles in WWI, which lasted in total from February 19, 1915 – January 9, 1916, with a huge loss of life, ending with an embarrassing retreat of the Entente armies. Arthur's case was sold at auction in March 2023 by the Turkish auction house Burak Filateli. Neither the winning price nor new owner was published.

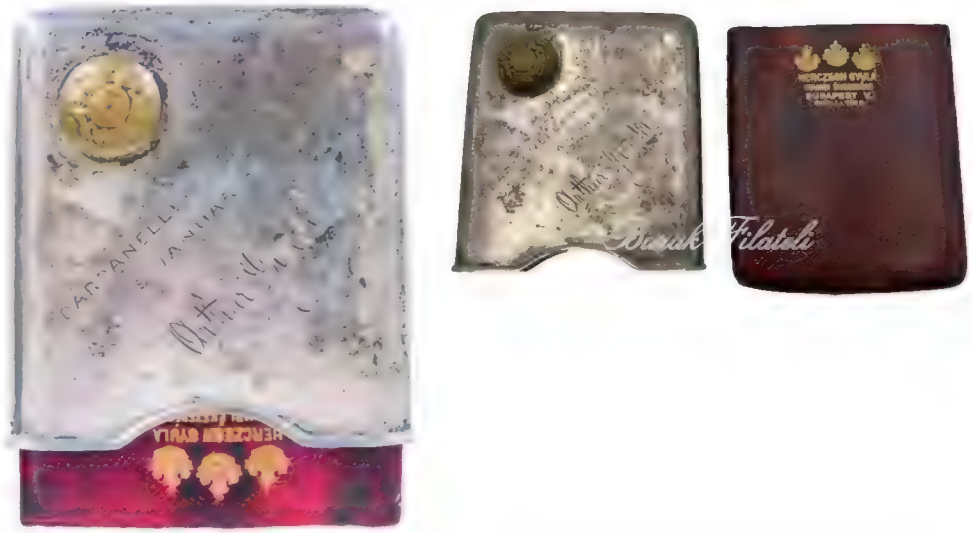

Figure 121.

Arthur's Silver Case

Note the engraving: "Dardanellen – SEDIL-BAHR

9 Januar 1916," Signed - Arthur Groedel

62.29 grams: "Court jeweler Gyula Herczegh" is written on the inside leather case

The case is decorated with a button of an English military uniform.

[89] *https://www.onlineburak.com/urun/3371303/gumus-kartvizitlik-canakkale-seddulbahir-9-ocak-1916-arthur-groedel-dardanell*

The Order of Battle

36th 15 cm howitzer battery[90]

One month after the mortar battery set off from Vienna, the second battery promised by the Austro-Hungarian command, Howitzer Battery No. 36 of the 4th Fort Artillery Regiment - "15 cm Haubitzbatterie Nr. 36 des Festungsartillerieregiments Nr. 4" - was also ready for the to go to the Turkish front. The battery's armament consisted of four 15 cm M14 type Skoda heavy field howitzers.

Captain Josef Martinek was appointed as the commander of the battery on October 14, 1915, and he held this position until December 18, 1915, when he arrived on the Gallipoli peninsula. We have no information about the battery's activities in October, but on November 10 it was already clear that the battery was designated for deployment in Turkey. On this day, Captain Karl Manouschek was appointed as the commander of the battery's training detachment, which at that time was already the "Turkey's 36th No. 15 cm howitzer battery" - "15 cm Haubitzbatterie Nr. 36 in der Türkei" - bore the name. Manouschek was tasked with mounting the battery for the trip to Turkey.

The battery was launched from Vienna on November 27 in two shipments. On the day of departure, Capt. Karl Manouschek was appointed commander of the howitzer unit, which led to the special situation that in the coming month, at least according to paper, the battery had two commanders at the same time: Capt. Martinek and Capt. Manouschek. We did not find any information about how this dual battery command was solved in practice in contemporary sources. We only have guesses about the reasons: it is possible that Captain Martinek was unofficially appointed group commander of the artillery formations destined for the Dardanelles at that time, but he could only officially assume this position when both batteries had already arrived at their destination. At the same time, it was obviously expedient to hand over the practical command of the howitzer formation to Captain Manouschek, under whose command the battery would later fight at the Dardanelles.

At the request of the Turkish supreme command, the battery set off for Turkey without their own draft animals, leaving behind in Vienna the heavy-bodied horses with greater forage requirements, which were less suited to the challenges of the Turkish front. Adequate draft animals were later provided by the Turkish military leadership.

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[90] *https://nagyhaboru.blog.hu/2015/11/28/osztrak_magyar_tuzeregysegek_tevekenysege_a_gallipoli-felszigeten*

The first leg of the journey was made by rail from Vienna via Budapest to Orsová, where they arrived on November 30. Here they were put on board three tugboats, and from there they continued their journey on the Danube to Sistov. At Sistov, they were transferred to the railway again, and the two shipments arrived in Uzunköprü on December 13th and 14th, touching Adrianople. Here, on the 15th, they received the order to march on to the Gallipoli peninsula as part of the 5th Ottoman Army and report to the headquarters in Jalová. They continued on the next day, the 16th. To haul the guns and military equipment, the 2nd Ottoman Army provided the draft animals, the small, hardy Turkish horses, which were replaced two days later, on the 18th, by the buffaloes of the 5th Army. After a five-day march, the battery reached its destination, Jalová, at two in the morning on December 21. It was here that the news of the unexpected evacuation of the Anafarta front the day before reached them, and the high command therefore sent them on to the southern front section that same day.

The arrival of the second Austro-Hungarian battery on the Gallipoli battlefield was also accompanied by a major internal organizational change. Capt. Josef Martinek, who until then shared the 36th with Capt. Karl Manouschek, took over the command of the howitzer battery, he officially took over the group command over the two Austrian-Hungarian batteries on December 19. From then on, even according to paper, the howitzer battery had only one commander, Captain Karl Manouschek, who was appointed on November 27. Two officers of the howitzer battery were assigned to group commander Martin as wing aide: reserve lieutenant Julius Stritzki and cadet Artúr Grödel, baron of Budapest.

At 4 a.m. on January 9, a fierce artillery duel broke out on the entire front line. The howitzer battery fired on the march route behind the English lines, assuming – quite correctly, as it turned out a few hours later – that the English were already retreating. No. 36 howitzer battery fired the last shot at 6:30 a.m. after the English forces left the peninsula for good.

After the victory, the two Austro-Hungarian batteries remained in position for a while on the Gallipoli peninsula. No. 36 the guns of the howitzer battery remained in place, the battery only moved its observation post to the beach at the southern tip of the peninsula in order to monitor the entrance to the Dardanelles. On January 24, the battery was ordered to embark at Akbaş and march to Constantinople. Due to various obstacles, embarkation could only take place on February 1. The ship "Kerkyra" put out to sea with the battery at 2 o'clock in the morning on February 2 and arrived in Constantinople at noon the same day. The battery was accommodat-

ed here in the Taksim barracks, and a few days later, on February 7, they marched in a ceremonial parade under the command of battery commander Manouschek in front of Enver Pasha.

Shortly after the battle, Arthur wrote two articles summarizing the fight with some bravado, accompanied by several photographs. Both articles were published in the newspaper Az Erdekes Ujság (The Interesting Newspaper) in April, 1916, three months after the Entente withdrew.

Figure 122.
The circle depicts the location of Sedd el Bahr

Figure 123.
Sedd el Bahr: Entrance to the Dardanelles Strait

Below are the articles Arthur wrote. His photographs are included in the Appendix.

Our Mortars in Constantinople

(Records of Ensign Arthur Baron Groedel.)

Published April 16, 1916

Az Erdekes Ujság (The Interesting Newspaper)

From the great battles that took place at the Dardanelles, where the valor of the Turks earned a price that never withered, we also took our share. Our military leadership sent heavy mortars and howitzers down to the Dardanelles to help the Turks beleaguered by the Entente, and the Austro-Hungarian artillery also deserves credit for repelling the English and French troops and the enemy fleet trying to reach Constantinople. Our mortars, which visited all the bloody battlefields of the World War, rumbled at Lüttich and under Antwerp, crushed the strong Russian positions at Gorlice, then sent their destructive shells against Belgrade, and fought on the side of our Turkish brothers down at the Dardanelles.

The French and the English christened their failure at the Dardanelles a glorious retreat. We know that at the beginning of the war, the threefold motto of the Entente: the conquest of Berlin, Budapest and Constantinople. One after the other, the Hungarian-Austrian-German army crushed this triple hope of the Entente. The Germans drew up their western front like a wall of ore against the French and English attacks, Hindenburg in East Prussia knocked the dream of Berlin out of the heads of the Russian leaders, they were stopped in their march against Budapest by the terrible battles in the Carpathians and Gorlice. But all this defeat was a "successful retreat" for our enemies.

The last thing that remained was shattering the hopes dreamed of Constantinople; the occupation of Serbia, the liberation of Macedonia, the establishment of a direct connection with our Turkish allies through Bulgaria, was still not enough evidence for our enemies that they would never reach Constantinople. They needed even stronger proof of this, and they got it at the Dardanelles, where they had to evacuate their positions held for months with great human sacrifice and terrible blood loss, if they did not want to be lost in the sea with their entire land expedition under the devastating fire of the Turkish offensive and our heavy mortars.

The Turks also appreciated our help and admitted that the Austro-Hungarian artillery played a decisive role in the final expulsion of the Anglo-French forces from the Gallipoli peninsula. Our mortars and howitzers sent there forced the enemy to

stop the Dardanelle action. After the gloriously completed work, the 36th howitzer battery went to Constantinople, where it received an enthusiastic and joyful welcome, especially from the Hungarian and Austrian colonies. But the Turks also showed great interest and warm appreciation for it, and the [Ottoman] Minister of War, Enver Pasha, the Vice-General, inspected the battery and repeatedly expressed his satisfaction to the officers and crew. After the revue in front of the Ministry of War in Stamboul, the battery marched to the Taxim wing on the Perai side, where Hungarians and Austrians enthusiastically celebrated the heroes who had gone through many hardships. On the same evening, the colony hosted the officers, which, just like the crew, had a larger number of Hungarians. The Hungarians also claim their fair share of the glory of the Dardanelles. Here are a bunch of successful pictures from the Istanbul review, which were taken by Baron Arthur Groedel, who fought as the ensign of the battery throughout the Gallipoli expedition.

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Down at the Dardanelles

(Records of Ensign Arthur Baron Groedel.)

Published April 16, 1916

Az Erdekes Ujság (The Interesting Newspaper)

The Turkish crescent shines triumphantly, with a light that has not shone from Stambul for a long time. The Russians began to spread news of a separate peace about Turkey, they believed so much in the effect of their success in the Caucasus and the capture of Erzerum, but now they themselves admit that the Turkish nation cannot conclude a separate peace. It cannot, because the Turkish crescent shines triumphantly. The Russian country did not want Erzerum and did not want the Persian Sea, towards which bay the Russian troops are trying in great haste, but who knows if they will ever get there. Russia wanted Constantinople and Constantinople was freed from the terror and danger of the Dardanelles siege, in Constantinople the Turks are the masters and not the Russians. The awakening of the Turkish nation was slow and difficult. It took learned politicians and great statesmen to perform an operation on the body of a dying patient, and the miracle operation was successful. Turkey is starting a new life before our eyes, the Turkish renaissance has begun. Today, we can only see how he put his army in order on German advice, how he put the army back on its feet, which after the Balkan wars, we could have believed would never again have the strength to measure its sword against a real enemy. And the

enemy just started enough against Turkey. The Russians in the Caucasus and from the Persian border, the British in Mesopotamia and along the Suez Canal, and the combined Entente force on the coasts of Asia Minor, which we should have said first, because it is the most important: it attacked him at the Dardanelles. The battle is still going on in waves on the other battlefields, but at the Dardanelles it ended with the ugly failure of the Entente, when the Entente troops landed on the shore had to retreat. We believed that war would overthrow all the old beliefs that held castles impregnable. After all, Namur, Lüttich or Antwerp collapsed almost like houses of cards at the hands of the Germans, the whole series of Russian western fortresses fell and even our considered impregnable Przemysl could fall into Russian hands for a short time. Only the Dardanelles preserved the ancient faith invested in it, the Dardanelles remained impregnable. This is why the national pride that fills the bosom of the Turks is understandable, but it can also be explained in another way, because if the Dardanelles had fallen, the fate of Turkey would have been sealed at the same time, this strait is so key to the entire Turkish empire. The Dardanelles were amazingly and unflinchingly defended by Turkish valor. These pictures, which were taken during the fierce fighting against the Dardanelles, show the scene of the operations and provide a glimpse into the organization of the Turkish army. What used to be our horses on the Hungarian train, the light and fast-moving carts down there on the shores of the Bosphorus, became camels: they transported ammunition and food to the fighting troops on the backs of camels. The Hungarian soldiers used such caravans to transport supplies for our artillery working below. Instead of trains, automobiles and horses, the king of the desert is the means of transport, and somehow this also means that another chapter of war operations, the war in the East, will begin here. Our interesting recordings, which were all taken one by one by a Hungarian ensign of the Austro-Hungarian artillerymen who fought at the Dardanelles, are also presented with some beautiful recordings from the Ordek military base. Ruins prove that heavy, serious battles took place here. Ships were sunk by English grenades, bridges believed to be indestructible were blown up, but they were not spared - the photo proves - even the gracious Turkish places and Mohammedan mosques fell victim to the rough fire of their bed.

Today, the chapters of these battles have closed. The cannons of English and French warships, even if they threaten the Turkish shores even at the entrance to the Dardanelles, today all this is an empty and vain fleet demonstration rather than a serious fight, only a demonstration that the Allies do not want to admit the failure of the war and still act as if this chapter of the Turkish war was not closed for them. How-

ever, we know very well that this terrible big failure suffered by the Entente cannot be wiped out here. We are only distant witnesses of the rebirth that took place in Turkey during the war, and the time is not suitable enough to clearly see the triggers of the rapid and wonderful transformation.

Today, we only see the characters on the stage of history, but we don't really know the forces that put them there and the reason why they were put there. In our eyes and – perhaps this feeling is right – this modern play, in which the modern history of Turkey plays out for us, has one visible protagonist, and that is Enver Pasha. German energy and Napoleonic courage started working on Turkey's future and present at the right time. We can't find out whether we, who are Hungarians, are particularly sympathetic to him, but he shows interest in us, and the Hungarian and Austrian batteries that fought for the glory of the Turks at the Dardanelles often saw Enver Pasha. Because he sees everything anyway and is everywhere. Although he is a soldier, he is also a statesman and diplomat, and it can be concluded that Turkey's destiny has been managed by his spirit since recent years. But it's as if Turkey itself is like this man. Fresh, vigorous, brave and optimistic, sold with hope for the future. Turkey has already drunk the cup of great trials, like all the nations that fought the terrible battles of the war. However slowly and quietly, the new future dawns on all nations that fought the victorious war against the Entente states. And it is also possible that the years following the war will strengthen the friendship that we made with Turkey in the Balkans by arms, which was also sanctified by the valor of the Hungarians down on the shores of the Dardanelles. And if it is so, then today there is no stronger chain of this friendship than the sword helping each other: protective cannon and soldier, as long as our enemies think that they will be victorious and dictate peace to us one day. Down by the Dardanelles, down in the Balkans, on the great Russian front in the east, they had to feel that all hope of their triumph was slipping away. And the time will come when the liberating power of victory will be felt everywhere, just as the Turks are now feeling it down at the Dardanelles, and as our enemies are feeling this failure.

Az Ujság, February 6, 1917

*– **Medal:** Baron Arthur Groedel, who has already been decorated for his brave conduct in the face of the enemy on several occasions, has now been awarded the Iron Cross by the German Emperor. The decorated lieutenant is the eldest of the four sons of Baron Hermann Groedel, who was involved in the battle of Gallipoli.*

The Dreaded Day Has Arrived

On June 29, 1917, Arthur was sent to the German camp hospital in Çanakkale (Chanak), on the east coast of the Dardanelle Strait suffering from dysentery. Of the approximately 225,000 men of the Ottoman Empire who died in the battle of the Dardanelles, almost 10% (21,000) perished from disease, and on July 5, Arthur succumbed as well. Several obituaries were mistaken in the cause of death.

Publication and date unknown:

Baron Artur Groedel, a reserve artillery lieutenant, died in the 28th year of his life in Asia Minor, near Troy.

During the war, the distinguished artillery officer took part with a heavy Howitzer battery in the fierce fighting with the Entente troops in the Dardanelles, where he repeatedly distinguished himself by his self-sacrifice, skill and courage. He was assigned to the Turkish army and fought for nearly a year in Asia Minor. His valor was rewarded with numerous Turkish medals. A young man of great talent, he rendered distinguished service to the Hungarian cause in Turkey.

His name will be remembered with gratitude by hundreds of Turks, whom he guided and advised in the sister nation. His talents served to the good of the Hungarian-Turkish fraternal relations. In the battlefield of Asia Minor, he contracted a fatal disease that ended his life. The inexorable death silenced him forever a man of truly great talent, and he chose a life destined for a glorious future.

With his demise, a cruel blow was dealt to Hungarians seeking a return to the East.

Baron Hermann Grodel and his wife, Melanie Weiner, lost their eldest son. The deeply grieved parents now have two sons fighting at the front[91].

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[91] *Probably Richard and Albert as Otto had major hearing problems.*

Neue Freie Presse, 15 July 1917, page 22

In deepest mourning we announce that our dear friend and brave comrade, Arthur Freiherr v. Groedel, Reserve Lieutenant, holder of the Austrian Golden Cross of Merit, the Medal of Valor, holder of the Silver Medal of Valor I. KL., Knight of the Iron Cross II. K1., holder of the Imperial Ottoman Silver Liakat Medal and the Iron Crescent etc. succumbed to the hardships of war on July 5, 1917 after a short, severe suffering, far from home.

K.u.K. Heavy Howitzer Battery No. 36.

In tiefster Trauer geben wir bekannt, dass unser lieber Freund und tapferer Kamerad

Arthur Freiherr v. Groedel

Leutnant i. d. Res., Besitzer des österr. goldenen Verdienstkreuzes am Bande der Tapferkeitsmedaille, Besitzer der silbernen Tapferkeitsmedaille I. Kl., Ritter des Eisernen Kreuzes II. Kl., Besitzer der kaiserl. osman. silbernen Liakatmedaille und des Eisernen Halbmondes etc.

am 5. Juli 1917 nach kurzem, schwerem Leiden, fern der Heimat, den Kriegsstrapazen erlegen ist.

K. u. k. schwere Haubitz-Batterie Nr. 36.

Clipping 16. Death notice; Arthur Groedel

Arthur died 18 months after the battle of the Dardanelles had ended on January 9, 1916, when Cape Helles was evacuated by the British, as inscribed on his silver case.

Figure 124. Translation: Original photo from the eastern theater of war, Austrian 30.5 cm. gun [Howitzer]

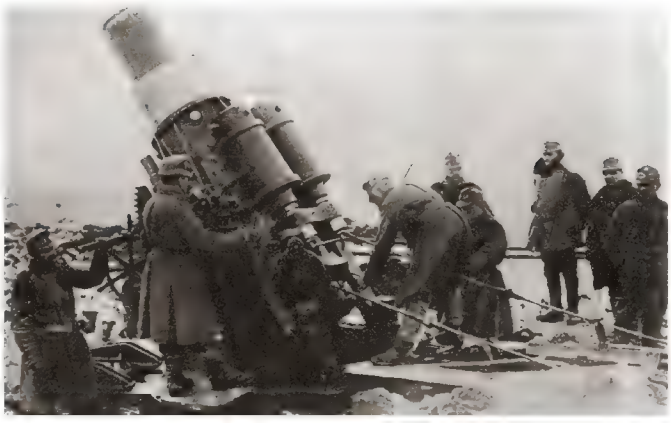


Figure 125. Austro-Hungarian artillery – Skoda Haubitzer (Howitzer) w/ammunition

The Great War Forum:
Discussing Baron Arthur Groedel's contribution to the war

In the persons of reserve gunners, we honor two Hungarians, Lajos Ács and János Budai, and thus, together with Baron Artúr Grödel, a cadet from Budapest with whom they served in the same battery, we know of three Hungarian gunners who took part in the Gallipoli campaign.

Baron Artur Grödel, as the only verifiably Hungarian member of the officer corps of the two batteries, should be mentioned in more detail. Artúr Grödel's ancestors emigrated from Hesse to Hungary around 1870, where they started a flourishing logging business, founding the Transylvanian Forestry Corporation. The newly wealthy Grödel family soon amassed an enormous fortune and rapidly rose up the Hungarian social ladder. In 1890 they were granted Hungarian citizenship and in 1903 Ferenc József granted them the title of Baron, from then on adding the title "Baron of Gyulafalva and Bogdan" to the Grödel family name. Born in 1886 in Máramarossziget, Artúr Grödel embarked on a promising diplomatic career at an early age. On March 8, 1914, Franz Joseph appointed him Honorary Austro-Hungarian Consul in Vancouver, where he remained until July 4, when he returned to Europe and volunteered for military service immediately after the outbreak of war. There are no records of his early military service, but in the autumn of 1915, he was a cadet in the 36th howitzer battery in the Dardanelles, where he served as a personal aide-de-camp to Group Commander Josef Martinek from 1 December to 25 March 1916. Artur Grödel remained with this battery until the end of his service, and on 10 August 1916 he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant.

As fate would have it, death came to him at the Dardanelles. On 29 June 1917, he was taken with dysentery and sent to the German field hospital in Çanakkale on the eastern coast of the Dardanelles where he died of heart failure on 5 July. The young baron was laid to rest with great solemnity on 10 July in the Feriköy Catholic Cemetery in Constantinople. The funeral service, which was celebrated by the Hungarian Franciscan monk Pál Schrotty, chaplain of the Constantinople Generalate, started from the Chapel of St. Mary of the Austro-Hungarian Embassy and was attended by the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador, Marquis von Pallavicini[92], and a number of Austro-Hungarian, German and Turkish military representatives. Arthur Grödel

[92] *Marquis von Pallavicini was widely regarded as one of the most respected diplomats of the Dual Monarchy*

was buried in Turkish soil for twelve years, until on 9 February 1929 his remains were transported to Austria and laid to rest in the crypt of the Grödel family in the Zentral Friedhof cemetery in Vienna.

In 2000 and 2007, plaques were unveiled in the Catholic cemetery in Feriköy, Istanbul, to commemorate 2nd Lieutenant Baron Arthur Groedel and six others who died fighting for the Ottomans. On his epitaph, it is written "...he died in Gallipoli while saving the motherland."

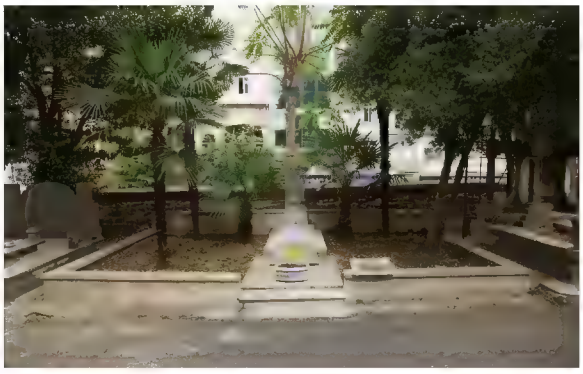
Source: Great War Forum[93] and "Between Empires – Beyond Borders, by Gabor Fodor 2020

A Fakereskedelem (The Timber Trade), July 18, 1917

***A heroic death**. Baron Groedel Arthur, son of Ármin Baron Groedel, who took part in the battles fought in the Dardanelles with a heavy Howitzer battery and was assigned to the Turkish army and fought in Asia Minor for almost a year, died a heroic death near Troy. The young Baron Groedel was 28 years old and received several Turkish awards. Baron Ármin Groedel and his wife b. Melanie Weiner, who have two more sons fighting at the front, lost their eldest son in it. Deep condolences are expressed everywhere for the painfully bereaved parents.*

A Motor, July 22, 1917

***Died**. Reserve Lieutenant Baron Groedel Arthur, the Golden Cross of Merit on the ribbon of the Medal of Valor and Division I. holder of a silver medal of valor, II. share. Knight of the Iron Cross, holder of the Imperial Ottoman Liakat Medal and Iron Crescent, etc. On July 5, 1917, after a brief suffering, he died away from his homeland as a result of disease during war. The deceased was also a very enthusiastic car lover. Many members of the Hungarian Automobile Club mourn their relatives and friends.*



Austro-Hungarian Soldiers memorial in Feriköy, Istanbul

(photograph by Gábor Fodor)

[93]*https://nagyhaboru.blog.hu/2015/11/28/osztrak_magyar_tuzeregysegek_tevekenysege_a_gallipoli-felszigeten*

Figure 126.
Baron Richard Groedel

RICHARD (1890-1964)

On June 12, 1944, the Gestapo barged into Richard's office in Budapest with guns drawn and dragged him away to ***Pestvidéker*** prison, where he was beaten, kicked, and treated inhumanely for two months, ***and then*** transferred to Kistarcsa, the prison outside of Budapest where Jews, political prisoners, and other 'undesirables' were held and subsequently sent to Auschwitz...

Richard Groedel was a man with a complex personality, marked by his wartime experiences, substantial family conflicts, challenging business endeavors, and survival in the face of adversity. His actions suggest a mix of determination, bravery, and a certain degree of isolation from broader societal interactions. Lajos Korbuly, the husband of Richard's cousin, Dora, once characterized him as follows: *"As a child, Baron Richard Groedel spent a long time in the Laehna reform school in Sopron, because he already had a tendency to all kinds of evil, lies and deceit, and his parents sent him to this private reform school for this reason."*

Little is known about Richard's formative years, other than he may have been challenging to handle, but as an adult, he proved to be a multifaceted individual and lived a complex but eventful life. Born in 1890, Richard was the fourth son of Hermann and Melanie, after Lajos, Arthur, and Otto. Fluent in German, Hungarian, English, and a bit of French, he was a war hero, enduring wounds on two separate occasions, once seriously, during the First World War. He was a businessman with a legal education, a dedicated spouse, a brother, a passionate hunter and environmentalist, an art lover, and a reclusive individual whose personal life was marred by conflicts within his family, including legal disputes with his sister Irén and cousin Dóra. Richard and his mother, Melanie, had a profoundly strained and ultimately severed relationship. Richard exhibited an unwavering resolve to control the family business – at any cost.

In his teen years, Richard was a decent student and attended business school. He joined the Austrian military, as did his brothers, at the beginning of WWI and eventually became a lieutenant in the Windischgratz Dragoons Regiment 14, which fought in Croatia and Italy. In a letter his father wrote to Field Marshall Lieutenant Baron von Giesl before Richard joined, using his influence, Hermann requested that, if possible, Richard be assigned to the Dragoons regiment:

Budapest, December 17, 1910

"Finally, I would like to make use of your kind permission to make a request to you, in that I kindly ask Your Excellency to warmly recommend my son Richard, who will serve his one-year voluntary year next October, to the colonel of a first dragoon or hussar regiment, and to inform me after the colonel's reply which regiment my son will choose. Your Excellency receives my best thanks in advance."

Richard's Military Service

According to Hermann's letter, Richard was to join the military for his required one-year service in 1910 at 20 years old. But in 1914, the beginning of World War I compelled him and his brothers to join or rejoin the Austrian military. Richard displayed exceptional bravery and determination as a lieutenant serving in the Dragoons Regiment, earning him two prestigious Signum laudis commendations for his heroic actions amid intense battles. Earlier in the war, as a cadet, he received a gunshot wound in October 1914 and was hospitalized in Osijek, Croatia.

By 1915, he had attained the rank of Lieutenant and was again wounded in action:

On November 13, 1915, the squadron of the Windischgratz Dragoon Regiment No. 14, which had been designated for reserve on foot, came under a heavy barrage of enemy artillery and was thus cut off from the forward established telephone station of the Landwehr Infantry Regiment No. 28. With particular coolness, Lieutenant Richard Freiherr v. Groedel, the youngest of the three sons[94] of Baron Hermann v. Groedel in the field, volunteered to his squadron commander to run to the telephone station despite the heaviest enemy artillery fire; it was thanks to him that the link between the swarm line in front of the squadron was established just at the moment when it was required to intervene in the battle. For this intrepid act, Lieutenant Richard Freiherr v. Groedel was awarded the Signum laudis on the ribbon of the Military Cross of Merit.

February 20, 1916 [source unavailable]

The King has awarded the highest commendation (Signum laudis) to Hussar Lieutenant D.R. Baron Richard Groedel [D.R. = Dragoon Regiment].

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[94] *Lajos had died in 1908 of a brain disease*

August 21, 1916 [source unavailable]

Baron Groedel badly wounded. We are told from Budapest: The lieutenant of the Windischgratz Dragoon Regiment, Baron Richard Groedel, was severely wounded in a storm attack. He was transferred to Budapest, where he will undergo an operation, as he did after he was wounded last year.

November 22, 1916

Lieutenant Baron Richard Groedel of a dragoon regiment, who in the battles before Stanislau performed a serious act, was again awarded the Silver Signum laudis. The young officer is on the road to recovery.

After his service, Richard left the military as an "invalid."

Later in the war while in Budapest, Richard found the time to write a will. Apparently, he uncovered and saved several pieces of artwork destined for destruction in Italy.

Von links nach rechts: Fmj. Graf Khuen-Belasi, Fähnr. Prinz Konstantin z. Hohenlohe-Langenburg, Olt. Josef Fatek, Rittm. Leopold Freiherr v. Gnagnoni, Abt des Klosters Oberstlt. Alfred v. Mossig, Lt. Felix Ungar, Kadett Baron Richard Groedel.

Figure 127.
Richard is last on the right.

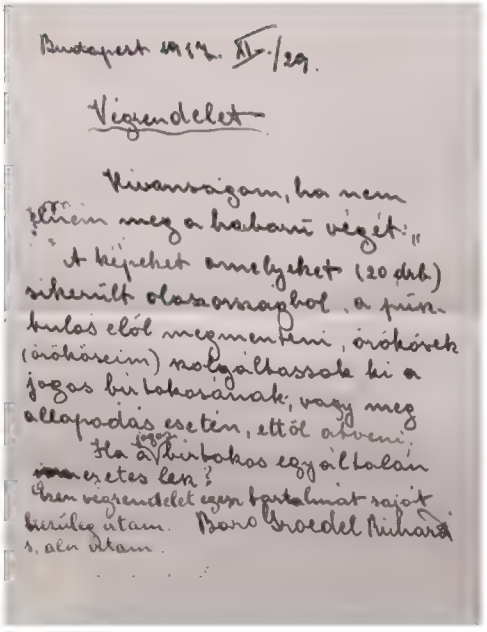
Last Will and Testament

Budapest, 1917, November 29

Testament

My wish, if I did not live to see the end of the war: 'The pictures (20 of them) which I have managed to save from destruction in Italy, shall be delivered by my heirs to the rightful owner, or, by agreement, taken over by him if the rightful owner is available at all. I have written the entire contents of this will in my own handwriting.

Baron Richard Groedel



Végrendelet

Kívánságom, ha nem
élném meg a háború végét:
A képeket amelyeket (20 db)
sikerült olaszországból a pusz-
tulás elől megmentenem, örökö-
(örököseim) nak átadhassák ki a
jogos birtokosának, vagy meg
állapodás esetén, attól átvenni
Ha a birtokos egyáltalán
nem volna?
Ezen végrendelet egész tartalmát sajátkezüleg írtam. Báró Groedel Richard
s. alá írtam.

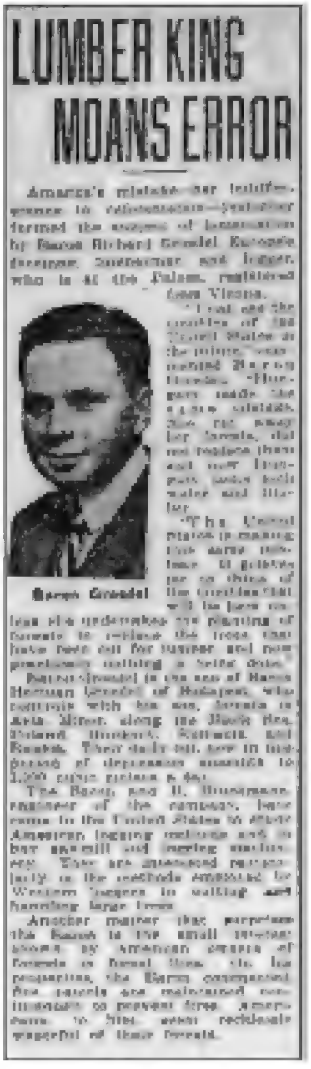
Figure 128. Richard's will

Richard was a fan of motorcars. He reportedly owned six Rolls-Royces in Skole, which were looked after by a phenomenal mechanic, "handyman", Piotr Kaliczak (1904-1957), who settled after the war in Bytom, Ukraine. Kaliczak was allowed, in the absence of the Groedels in Skole, to take guests with a Rolls-Royce around town. It always aroused the sensation of vacationers and passers-by on the streets.

In the Fall of 1922, Richard and an accompanying engineer made an extensive visit to the United States to better understand the American forest industry and logging methods. Shortly before his visit, his father had concluded an agreement with the Turkish government to log a sizable tract of timber south of the Black Sea area, and Richard had come to the US to determine if American methods might be adopted there.

Richard (32) arrived in the US with Baron Hugo Bruckmann (37), whose company in Austria, G. Topham & Co., manufactured sawmill machinery. They visited New York, Buffalo, Detroit, Chicago, Tacoma, Seattle and Portland, then down the coast to the sugar pine region of California around San Francisco and then across to New Orleans. They first arrived in the US around October 10 and departed for home from New York on December 4.

Newspapers make no mention of Richard visiting family in the US or embarking on a tour unrelated to business. There are no family anecdotes recounting his visit, although upon his arrival, Richard had numerous relatives in the New York and New Jersey vicinity. It would be surprising if Hermann hadn't proposed a family visit to Richard before his trip, but he likely declined the suggestion.



LUMBER KING MOANS ERROR

Baron Groedel

Clipping 17
SF Examiner, November 8, 1922

Two Austrian timbermen in attendance at the fourth annual logging congress—(Left) Hugo Bruckmann; (Right) Baron Richard Groedel

Richard's Power

After Hermann's death in November 1930, the family voted for Bernhard as the new company CEO, but it was Richard who actually ran the business. His tenure proved arduous as a hunger for power and control dictated his actions which impacted his family relationships to everyone's detriment. Within the first several months, he instigated a feud with his mother and sisters and later escalated tensions with Lajos Korbuly, his cousin's husband and investor in the business. The feuds and lawsuits extended well into the war years when by the end of WWII, there was nothing left to sue for (see chapter "The Groedel Family Feud" for further details). During that period, many family members had died, including his mother, uncles Bernhard and Albert, and cousin Hans, or had escaped to other countries, such as Switzerland, Canada, Australia and the US.

HIAS

In 1948, Richard applied for assistance from HIAS, formerly the Hebrew Sheltering and Immigrant Aid Society, an American charitable organization helping displaced persons. Because of the war, Richard had no nationality and, having crossed illegally into Austria from Hungary in 1947, was requesting citizenship. He aimed to immigrate to the US or Australia, where some family members had emigrated. He also had a business in the US and England where he was an officer of a "holding company" along with his brother Otto, and needed to appear in person to maintain his position. He could not do that without citizenship and a passport. Although he was unable to emigrate, he was able to obtain temporary citizenship from Austria. But the story he tells from his time during the war is a difficult one, even for someone like Richard who may not invite much sympathy.

In 1946, Richard wrote a letter to his cousin, Dr. Franz Groedel, in New York that was published later that year in a lumber trade magazine, The Timberman. Franz was a world-renowned heart specialist who was the first to show a moving picture of the beating heart taken from the fluoroscopic screen, but more importantly, the founder of the American College of Cardiology. It's not known how Richard's letter made it into the hands of The Timberman, but we are fortunate to have it.

In the letter, Richard tells the story of his arrest and subsequent torture by the Gestapo after they had invaded Budapest. How Richard drew the ire of the Gestapo is described in detail in the chapter "Family Feud."

THE LAST DAYS OF THE DE GROEDEL LUMBER EMPIRE

The tragic story of one of Central Europe's greatest private lumber concerns, whose holdings were stolen and its people crushed when Hitler's legions rolled east.

Source: The Timberman, Volume 47, Part 2, pages 72 & 74, September, 1946

As the veil of secrecy begins to lift on the central European scene and personal communications begins to trickle out to America, the fate of various private timberland owners and lumber manufacturers in Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia and neighboring countries is gradually coming to light. Their suffering was by no means confined to loss of their holdings and private fortunes as a result of German occupation. Starvation, suicide or death in the lethal gas chamber was the end of the road for a number of prominent lumber people of a happier era.

In particular, this is the story of Baron Richard de Groedel, once known as the Lumber King of Hungary. The Groedels were friends of the earlier Weyerhaeusers, the Busches of brewing fame, and members of the family were frequent visitors to the Unites States a generation ago. The fall of the Groedel lumber empire is told in a letter by Baron Richard to his cousin, Prof. Dr. Francis Groedel, now a resident of New York. It is translated from the German:

"This is an account of how we fared during the days of the German occupation and thereafter. Up to 1939, I lived in Vienna, and I was there when Hitler marched into Austria. I saw him twice and got the worst possible impression of him. I told my wife that I did not intend to live in a country ruled by such a gang, so we left Vienna and went to Groedelowo-Skole in Poland. This was the seat of the Groedel family, where there were 60,000 acres of well-managed perpetual forests and two modern sawmills.

"We were not there long until the Germans marched into Poland. I strongly advised my Uncle Albert de Groedel and his son, Hans, who had fled hither from Czechoslovakia, to leave at once for Rumania, which they did and I followed soon after. When the Germans entered Rumania, my uncle, my wife and I fled once more to Hungary.

My cousin Hans suggested that I go with him to America by way of Turkey. This I did not want to do because it meant leaving my wife behind. She might have been relatively safe because she had no Jewish strain in her blood. But still, I could not do it. Hans eventually got to the United States and there committed suicide. Nobody knows why, although some surmise that he got into a bad financial transaction and lost everything. In any event we know he suffered greatly in mind and soul before arriving in America[95].

"Hans' father lived on our Transylvania estate during the time I was in Budapest. In 1942 I applied for a visa to emigrate to America and this was properly transmitted. However, before the final papers could be arranged, the American Embassy staff had abandoned Budapest. There I was trapped with no way out.

"Shortly after this bitter disappointment, the Germans marched into Hungary and promptly two Gestapo agents with drawn guns entered my office and informed me that my wife had been imprisoned and that now it was my turn. I was sent to a concentration camp in a prisoners' van, where all my personal belongings were taken away from me. I was badly beaten with clubs and kicked with heavy boots, then thrown into an already overcrowded cell.

"My wife got off a little better, since she was pure Aryan. However, she was accused of having committed a grave crime against the German nation by reason of having married a man with Jewish blood in his veins. A month later she was set free and made to promise that she would leave me and Budapest forever. Instead, she went into hiding and did everything she could to save me and others. Many persons still thank her for her efforts in saving their lives.

"In the meantime, the Gestapo pilfered our offices and houses; took away my two motor cars. I saved nothing but some laundry not yet delivered and a few clothes left at the cleaners for pressing and repairs. Furniture and oil paintings in my house were ruthlessly burned.

"I spent two months in jail and finally came to trial. I was accused first of all of having defiled the German race through my marriage. Next, I was accused of having secret codes in the United States, probably because they found certain papers relating to my passport application and letters written to ascertain the whereabouts of my family. Next, I was accused of having supported Polish partisans. As a matter of

[95]*Han's business had been confiscated and he was removed as an employee. Eventually, Hans was jailed but escaped.*

fact, I did what I could for Polish war orphans and refugees at Christmas and Easter.

"The trial was very short. I was told that I lied about everything and was thrown back into an empty cell, without so much as straw on the floor. I was there for four months, literally starving by the day. By mere chance I got free and went into hiding for a time. Then I changed my name and worked during the winter as a gardener. I was able to obtain very little food.

"Finally the Russians came. With the Russians I entered Budapest once more. There I found my good wife in a cellar half-starved and pitifully thin. But we are getting on now and what we suffered personally, we may forget, but we can never forget those we lost by death.

"If you meet friends you dare not inquire after the wife or husband or son or daughter. You must wait until they tell you; then you will know whether they are alive or dead.

"At present we are staying with a friend whose wife and daughter were killed in the gas chamber at Auschwitz. Poor Uncle Albert too, after eight days of cruelty enroute, was finally gassed at Auschwitz.[96]

Thus ends the first report of Baron Richard de Groedel to his cousin in New York. Perhaps later details may tell of what finally happened to the forest holding and mills; in whose hand they are; whether there is any prospect of eventual restoration.

In his 1948 request for assistance from HIAS, Richard was required to provide a detailed account of his work and whereabouts over the previous decade. In the submitted documents, he gave a similar narrative to his past accounts, with some additional details and minor adjustments, possibly aiming for greater accuracy and completeness to secure the agency's support.

Though Richard was aware of the hardships Jews faced in Nazi-occupied Budapest—and may not have fully known or considered that his sister, Iren, and other family members were confined to the ghetto—he returned to his father's home at 26 Lendvay utca from Skole. On June 12, 1944, as he later recounted in a letter to his cousin Franz, the Gestapo raided his office at 8 Bathory utca and

[96]*Source: The Timberman, Volume 47, Part 2, pages 72 & 74, September, 1946*

took him to the Pestvidéki Fogház, a prison across the Danube in Pest. Richard endured two months of imprisonment and torture there before the Hungarian police's Gestapo branch transferred him to a camp in Kistárcsa, where he was detained for another month. On September 6, 1944, with help from friends, he escaped just before his planned deportation to Auschwitz.

During World War II, Pestvidéki Fogház served as Hungary's largest detention facility, initially functioning as a military prison. In 1948, the Hungarian Secret Police (AVH) took control, converting it into a detention camp where detainees could spend years awaiting unresolved cases. Many were periodically taken to 60 Andrássy utca for questioning—a building now known as the House of Terror Museum, which commemorates victims of Hungary's fascist and communist regimes. Richard likely endured some of these conditions.

Individuals who were arrested but lacked sufficient evidence for trial were typically interned in Kistarcsa, Hungary's main internment camp, where Richard was held. After Hungary's German occupation on March 19, 1944, many Jews were swiftly detained and transported to Kistarcsa by Hungarian police under SS administration. On April 29, 1944, a train carrying 1,800 Jewish prisoners departed Kistarcsa for Auschwitz, followed by 18 more similar transports from Budapest. Although news of Auschwitz's horrors had reached Hungary, Richard was fortunate to escape, likely aided by high-level contacts and possibly bribery. A month later, in September 1944, the camp was dismantled, and the remaining prisoners were sent to other locations.

Richard's HIAS documents also state, "After a short time, the Szálasi Arrow Cross Party came to power. I went underground in Pesterzsébet, hiding there because I was constantly in danger. Only after the arrival of the Russians on 01/29/1945 did I return to Budapest."

After his release, Richard used an assumed name and found temporary work as a gardener. Facing the oppressive political situation in Hungary, he crossed into Austria illegally in 1947.

In 1934, Richard married Valerie, but they may have been forcibly divorced, likely due to the harsh anti-Jewish marriage laws imposed by the Nazis and the threats during their incarceration. Though they never remarried, Richard and Valerie were laid to rest together in the family crypt (14B) at Vienna's Zentralfriedhof, alongside Richard's brothers and father, Hermann.

Figure 129.
Valerie Groezinger (Grotzinger)

In November 1932, amidst the family dispute, the Magyar Hitel newspaper dedicated an extensive article delving into the family dynamics and ongoing legal battles. As a prelude, they presented "portraits" of certain family members, asserting to provide an account *"with the utmost objectivity and honest bluntness based on authentic records, family correspondence, wills, and reports."* Upon closer scrutiny, however, the article reveals a discernible judgmental undertone in its assessment of the human traits and flaws inherent in Richard and Albert. Despite this, it weaves a narrative of their personalities that resonates with other portrayals, particularly echoing the perspectives of Anna Lato. In other sections of this book, Lato captures the nuances of Richard and Albert's interactions with employees in Kommando, which were not positive.

Magyar Hitel

November 1932

There are three branches of the family, from three brothers, Herman, Bernhard and Albert. The eldest was Hermann, a very clever, quick-witted and thrifty businessman. He saw money, as he explained to the writer of these lines some twenty years ago, as a means and not an end in itself. Bernhard was less involved in the accumulation of wealth, and Albert, who, as we have seen, had to be placed under guardianship for his prodigality[97] *and is now interned on the Groedel family's hundred-thousand-acre forest estate in Skole, was terrified of business and squandered his fortune on worldly amusements. Bernhard is a give and take, a careless man, who likes to fiddle or read a newspaper or swing his legs or play mills at vitally important meetings. I say: the life-blood of the whole family was Baron Hermann, who, in his exemplary family life, surrounded his wife and eight children with deep love. The children were educated like noblemen. The father made great sacrifices for them. But Richard and Albert took no undue interest in their schooling. They lived the most unconcerned and empty life of millionaire children; they developed no fond memories, no sense of respect and admiration for people; they never worked seriously. The old baron's distinguished connections had to be used many times to overcome their lack of inhibition and its consequences. Of opposite nature was his eldest son, Arthur, who inherited his father's calm temperament, wit and business acumen. That alone made him worthy to be taken into business. But Arthur did not long enjoy the benefits of great wealth.*

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[97] *Gambling*

During the war, as an Austrian, he served with the Hungarian nomad in Estonia and under the command of German Commander Limán von Sanders in Turkey. At the age of thirty-one, he fell on the battlefield in 1916. He had an excellent sense of art. He collected the most valuable pieces for the Groedel family's fine and world-famous collection of rugs far and wide. Lajos followed, but he died in 1909 at the age of 21. Otto came next. He is currently 44 years old. His wife was Izabella Tartsay, but she divorced him and married György Wolfner in her second marriage. Otto's marriage resulted in one daughter; Mary. Otto, unlike his brothers, is a highly cultured and benevolent gentleman who loves peace and despairs of the quarrels and eccentricities of his two younger brothers, Richard and Albert. An easy-going gentleman, he does not shy away from the outside world and although, unfortunately, suffers from physical impairment of hard of hearing, he enjoys socializing and is eager to listen to the good advice of uninterested people. He is in sharp contrast to his younger brothers, Richard, 43, and Albert, 34. Richard has an unabashed, raw and rhapsodic nature. Together with his brother Albert, he is hermetically sealed off from the outside world. The world moves on, but they learn nothing, learn nothing and have no idea what is happening out there in the world. Richard lives in Skole, not in two stately mansions decorated with princely splendor, but in a small, primitive hunting lodge. An eccentric who has no contact with anyone other than a few subordinates Tony Smólen and his secretary. You imagine the wise and honest advice of Tony Smólen, who, trembling for his modest position, stands before his humble position before the high lord. Anyone who dares to make a suggestion or betrays a shred of good feeling towards the rest of the family is immediately given the silk cord of transfer and is flown from Vienna, Budapest, Skole or Maramures to the top of the Retyezat mountain. This is a very bad boy, this is Richard. But Albert is no different than Mrs. Deák's canvas. One of the Transylvanian companies, Carpatina, belonged to their mother, who once gave her son Richard the majority of the shares she owned for representation at a general meeting. When he received the shares, he insinuated that he could now ruin his mother. He was right, because he kept the Carpatina share inheritance for himself. He was the outstanding child who did not allow his mother's private loan of 80.000 Swiss francs to International Trust A. G. (Itag.)[98] to be paid back and did this when he knew that the widow Groedel could not even afford rent so her rich son had to pay 3,333 pengo for her rent and the heating contribution.

The other evil spirit in the Groedel family is Albert. He is also unmarried. He lives in

[98] *A family trust that included much of the timber properties and money*

Kalotaszeg [a town in NW Romania -jz], in the same surroundings as Richard. He was a dramatically bad student. He is a weak human seedling, but a cunning one who always wants to share his plan with others. An excellent medium for this is the eccentric Richard, who is made arrogant by his physical strength. For the time being, they are both skillfully maneuvering the ocean of obligations facing them [i.e. business/bank loans -jz]. In Vienna, where the head office of the consortium operates and the claims are in fact to be enforced before the Austrian courts under the Treaties, they cannot be seized. They don't even have an apartment. Well, they do, but under unfamiliar names and three-room flats furnished in bourgeois simplicity. You can make a reservation here for up to ten or twenty million pengos. If a reservation is made, the unpleasant consequences of it will be born by Baron Otto, who lives in Vienna, and Baroness Stefania Groedel Königswarter, also a resident of Vienna, and the female heirs living in Hungary, who took responsibility in a family contract. In fact, Richard and Albert have so far come away with clean hands for the consequences of their strange games. For how long? Not for long.

Richard passed away in Vienna in 1964, and Valerie in 1971.

The Story of Baron Richard and Sara Knebel

In the late 1990s, this author was traveling on business to Sydney Australia, and met with Richard Knebel and his daughter, Rachel, in Sydney.

Several years prior, through the Internet, my sister and I had learned that there was a Groedel family member in Sydney, Australia, named Richard Knebel. Richard had been told by his mother, Sarah, that she was the daughter of Baron Richard Groedel, although officially, Baron Richard had no children with his only wife, Valerie Groszinger. Richard and Rachel appeared to have been aware that Sarah was probably born out of wedlock. In addition, Richard showed me his late mother's passport, which clearly displayed her family name as Groedel.

While in Sydney, Rachel told me that her grandmother, Sarah, had told of her father, Baron Richard, coming to visit her as a child, at least over the holidays. In addition, Richard Knebel had built a well-known kitchen remodeling business in the Sydney area called "Groedel Kitchens," but after a change in fortune, it was renamed "Knebel Kitchens." Unfortunately, Richard had no other proof that his grandfather was Baron Richard Groedel.

Prior to my trip to Sydney, Mr. Knebel provided the following letter from Harry Winkler to underscore the relationship. Harry Winkler was a salesman for the European lumber wholesaler Ernst Seidelmann Corp, with an office on Murray Street in NYC. It is said that Ernst Seidlemann was the largest and most important channel for the Groedel business in Europe.

Below, is the letter from Harry to Sarah Groedel Knebel. Harry Winkler is the father of the famous actor Henry Winkler of "Happy Days" fame and other theater works.

Since none of the current Groedel descendants had ever heard of Baron Richard fathering a child, in 2022, I asked Rachel if she would agree to take a DNA test since her father declined. After reviewing her results, it was clear that Rachel Knebel shares no DNA with the Groedel family or with this author. Given the

ERNST SEIDELMANN CORPORATION

July 1, 1980

Mrs. Sarah Knebel
Knebel Kitchens
14 Baker Street
East Botany, N.S.W. 2019
Australia

Dear Mrs. Knebel:

Let me begin with the usual "what a small world it is". To think that in this big world of ours, you coincidently, met my son, Henry Winkler, somewhere in Australia, and that through this meeting we have orbitted into a big wide circle wh ch has brought us back to the "good old days" of BARON VON GROEDEL CONCERN.

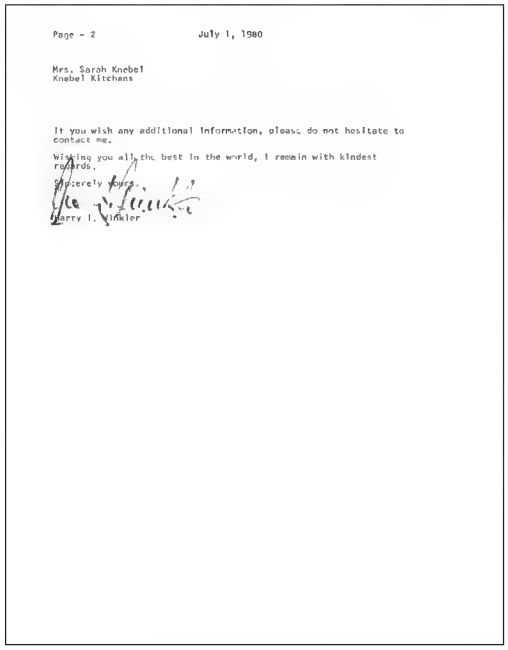
As you might have heard, my wife, Lisa and myself had spent a great deal of time at the different tremendous timberland estates of this concern, which boasted the largest production centers in the Carpathian Mountains of Hungary, Poland and Romania where Mrs. Winkler and myse f enjoyed unforgetable times at the beautiful Castles of the Baron Von Groedel which consisted of 26 to 40 rooms, where we lived like Queens and Kings.

The Groedel Concern, was "once upon a time", the largest private forest owner and timber producer in the whole world, with its huge timberlands and sawmills in the different Eastern countries of Europe. This Concern owned their own lumber carrying steamers under the name, "GROEDEL LINE". They carried our lumber products from the Black Sea Ports of Romania, like Constanza, Bra la, etc. and also from the North Atlantic Ports of Danzig to almost all corners of the world.

Our sales offices were in Buc.resti, Vienna, Budapest, Berlin and Amsterdam and I can only compare this company to Weyerhaeuser and Georgia Pacific in the U.S.A. I am telling you all this in order to give you a better picture of the huge size of the Groedel Concern, which has now "gone down the drain", "tempi passati", and enterprises like this one, practically do not exist any more.

I hope that the short history I presented will give you a better idea of the significance of what was once the world-wide and renown. "GROEDEL CONCERN".

continued . . .



Page - 2 July 1, 1980

Mrs. Sarah Knebel
Knebel Kitchens

If you wish any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Wishing you all the best in the world, I remain with kindest regards.

Sincerely Yours,

Harry I. Winkler

Figure 130.
Letter from Harry Winkler to Sarah Groedel Knebel, pg1

Figure 131.
Letter from Harry Winkler to Sarah Groedel Knebel, pg2

generational reach of this type of DNA test, I would have expected at least a small amount of shared DNA if the story were true.

In conclusion, there is no evidence of a blood relationship between the Knebel and Groedel families. However, this does not negate the stories that Sarah shared with her son, Richard Knebel, and her granddaughter, Rachel. Based on extensive family research, it appears the Groedel family showed great kindness

toward their employees, likely including Sarah's mother. It seems probable that Sarah was born out of wedlock, and to avoid the stigma of being an unwed mother, Sarah's mother might have named her wealthy employer, Baron Richard, as the father. There may be other reasons why Baron Richard was considered Sarah's father, but I will leave those possibilities to the consideration of others.

Baron Richard Really Does Sire a Child (maybe)

In 2018, I received a message on MyHeritage claiming that Hermann Groedel had a daughter, Zofia (name changed for privacy), with a woman named Stefania (surname withheld for privacy). After exchanging several emails, the gentleman who provided the information, clarified that he was in error, and that it was actually Richard, not Hermann, who was involved. He explained that Richard and Stefania were never married and that she had worked on the Groedel estate in Skole. Initially, the gentleman stated that Richard wanted Zofia to be recognized as his daughter, but Stefania refused, as she was married to a man with whom she had other children. Zofia was raised within this family, and her connection to the Groedel lineage remained a closely guarded family secret. In 2022, after several years of silence, the gentleman responded again, adding that Richard had wanted to adopt Zofia, but Stefania did not consent.

In 2023, I suggested a DNA test of Zofia's grandchildren to confirm the relationship. The gentleman declined, stating that this was a family secret of his wife, who was Zofia's daughter. He explained that since Zofia had been raised in another family, her paternity no longer held significance, except in matters of inheritance, which was not a concern. He regarded the story as an interesting family mystery but not something that needed further verification.

I decided not to pursue the matter further, as no DNA test would be conducted and the family wished to leave the past undisturbed. If Richard was indeed Zofia's father, the event likely took place in 1918 during the war, before Richard was married.

OTTO (1889-1958)

Figure 132.
Otto Groedel

Otto Groedel, the third child and third son for Hermann and Melanie, was two years younger than his brother Arthur, and one year older than Richard. Otto was born in Máramarossziget on August 29, 1889. At the age of 14, Otto began attending the Budapest Academy of Commerce from 1903-1908, a year ahead of Richard. In 1901/2, the family moved to Budapest from Máramarossziget. Beginning in 1908, Otto, now a baron since 1905, attended a university in London, but details require further investigation.

Both Otto and Richard shared a profound passion for automobiles, and were members of The Royal Hungarian Automobile Club.

Baron Otto was 29 when in 1918 he married Isabella Tartsay, who was 18 at the time. Unfortunately, scant information is readily accessible regarding Isabella's lineage, although indications suggest her origins traced back to a distinguished Hungarian noble family. Notably, her father, Janos von Tartsay, served as a Hussar colonel during the tumult of WWI.

Throughout their courtship, Isabella wrote numerous love letters to the young baron, displaying her eloquence and passion.[99] The letters show her deep and honest love, not for Baron Otto Groedel, "but only Otto, my Otto." She also wrote, "I come from the Asra tribe[100] and Hindu women are buried alive in their husband's grave... I can also die with love."

Otto and Isabella married in Budapest on October 16, 1918, but lived in Vienna in a four-room apartment that Otto selected as he preferred to live a quiet life. In contrast, Isabella was more interested in socializing. According to reports, Otto adored his wife, but she was discontent with the material benefits of her new position, longing instead for an important role in Viennese society and to dazzle Vienna with her beauty and elegance. The baroness insisted on daily receptions, but Otto, who was not fond of excessive socializing as a result of the effects of his hearing loss, and Isabella, had constant disagreements. Otto was nearly deaf and his hearing impairment limited his interactions with people

[99] *This author has not seen the letters. This information comes from contemporaneous newspaper articles.*

[100] *in Heine's poem, the Asra were a tribe of Arabs who 'die when they love.' (https://allpoetry.com/Der-Asra#)*

to communicate through a hearing aid. In social situations this became quite uneasy as the volume of their speech was quite loud to the annoyance of those around them. The situation slowly became unbearable, even after Isabella gave birth to Mary in August 1920 during their second year of marriage, which was an unhappy one.

In 1922, Isabella took two-year-old Mary and set up her own apartment. During their separation, Otto and Isabella agreed as to the upbringing of their daughter that included her father's visitation rights. In December 1924, Isabella filed for divorce, which eventually became fodder for the public.

However, several months prior to the end of 1924, while she was away, Otto secretly took Mary and left Vienna for Budapest. After some investigation, Isabella learned that Otto and Mary were living in his parents' home on Lendvay ut in Budapest.

Isabella sued Otto and took their fight to the Viennese courts. The district court in Vienna heard the case, during which it was revealed that the spouses had not yet [legally] separated and therefore ruled that the child was to stay with Otto.

Several witnesses were questioned during the trial. Franz Studeny, Hermann's estate manager, who had been serving the Groedel family for twenty-five years, stated in his testimony that he did not consider Baron Groedel Otto to be a normal person and also mentioned that during the war the young baron had severely abused the soldiers assigned to him on several occasions. Due to this witness statement, Otto initiated a defamation case against him. This trial was presumably only the introduction to several other lawsuits, which were the consequences of Otto's unfortunate marriage.

The court case over the divorce would continue, but Otto demanded the case be moved to Máramarossziget where he was a Romanian citizen. The Viennese court considered the request, and eventually relinquished its role in the case, and it moved to Máramarossziget, where presumably, Otto would have some influence over the courts.

The divorce was finalized in 1925, but further details are missing and require additional investigation.

Trying to classify Otto's personality is difficult as there was little detail available during research for this book. However, the little available brings us to the following: Otto had difficult choices to make – he was negatively influenced by both Richard and Albert to his detriment, but also felt concern for his mother and sisters. His marriage was challenging and he had significant hearing loss. And there does appear to be some information that alludes to Otto's unfortunate wartime conduct, but details are absent.

Otto appears to have been caught in the middle of a power grab which began with Hermann's death in 1930 by his two younger brothers, Richard and Albert, versus the rest of the family. Otto went along with his brothers' illegal schemes to snatch authority and control of the business from his mother as detailed below in the chapter Family Feud. However, he wouldn't go so far as to sell the business, wanted by Richard and Albert, which would have put his sisters and mother in a financial bind, voting with the women against the sale.

In a letter to her daughter, Irén, in 1942, written about a month before she died, Melanie stated, *"Otto does not recognize his power of attorney either."* This could mean that Melanie had some trust in Otto, that he could have effected a change in the business, but was either unaware or unwilling to do so (he may not have wanted to go against his brothers). In addition, in an interview with the Hungarian police in 1945 as part of the family feud, Lajos Korbuly (Dora's husband) said, *"I have in my possession letters from Albert Groedel and Otto Groedel to me, which describe Richard Groedel as anything but a decent man."* So, Otto was clearly aware of Richard's shortcomings and was moved to write to Kobuly about it as evidence in court.

In 1931, Otto was selected by the Prince of Monaco as Consul General to Romania in Bucharest.

Otto passed away in Monaco on May 19, 1958, and is buried with his father and brothers in the family crypt in Vienna.

Pesti Napló, January 25, 1925

Baron Groedel wants to negotiate his divorce in Marmaros Island.

The divorce of Baron Otto Groedel, the son of Hermann Groedel of Budapest, caused a great stir in Viennese society and especially in financial circles. The beautiful young Baroness's husband was, as is well known, almost completely deaf as a result of a childhood illness. Wherever the young couple visited, their forced loud speech caused a sensation. Later, Baron Groedel sought a cure for his deafness and consulted a famous teacher, who declared his ear ailment incurable. It was then that the harmony of the young couple's lives was disrupted. The Baroness moved with her daughter to her grandmother's house, from where Baron Otto Groedel later brought her to Budapest. A whole series of fires sprang from the front. The two families became so distant from each other as a result of the brouhaha that there are now serious financial differences between them.

Although the Groedel family is still very wealthy, they have been hit by one financial disaster after another in recent times, and one of the Viennese banks with which the Groedels are related has been shaken by the speculation. The Holdingus Bank in Budapest, which was also a mainstay of the Groedel family, has recently suffered heavy losses due to misguided grain speculation. The Baron's divorce also came at a critical time. In addition, Baron Otto Groedel lost yet another case against his uncle's plenipotentiary, who had criticized his wartime conduct. It was in the midst of this pile-up that the first hearing of the Baron's divorce case was to take place, but it was adjourned at the request of Otto Groedel.

The Baron had expressed his wish to have his divorce heard in Maramaros. This wish caused great consternation in Viennese society, because it is the custom everywhere in the world to try cases where the litigants live. Baron Groedel probably thinks that he will be more successful in his lawsuits in Maramures Island, because the Romanian judges are known to be susceptible to influence. Financial circles in Vienna are curious to see whether the Austrian court will grant the judge's request.

ANNO: The Hour
December 19, 1924

The marriage affair of Baron Groedel
The battle for the child and for honor

In Viennese society circles, the marriage affair of an aristocrat has been the subject of lively interest for weeks. At the center of the affair is the beautiful young wife of Viennese industrialist Baron Otto Groedel. Rumors about this marital conflict have already been circulating in public, but the announcements published so far have often been incorrect. We are able to provide the following interesting details about this matter, which will soon be before the court.

The trial has an almost romantic history. Baron Otto Groedel, the son of the industrialist Baron Hermann Groedel, who served during the war as a lieutenant in the field howitzer regiment No. 25, fell in love with Elisabeth Tarczay, the young, beautiful daughter of a nobleman, the former landowner Tarczay. After a short acquaintance, the rich baron married the beautiful Babica and took her to Vienna. The young couple lived in the Groedel Palace in Margareten. Otto Groedel offered his young wife, whom he idolized, the opportunity to lead a carefree, noble life. However, the woman, who had suddenly risen high from poverty, was not content with this, but wanted to play a major role in society. She demanded luxury, she organized glittering evenings. Otto Groedel, who had become deaf during the war as a result of an injury and who was no friend of excessive luxury, did not feel comfortable in the midst of such a noisy life.

The love marriage became a torture

For two years the marriage was childless. Last year little Mary was born. But even this event could not resolve the increasingly sharp differences. They hadn't lived together since last fall. The young woman set up her own apartment in the upper Weißgärberstraße. She took her little girl with her.

The abduction of his own child

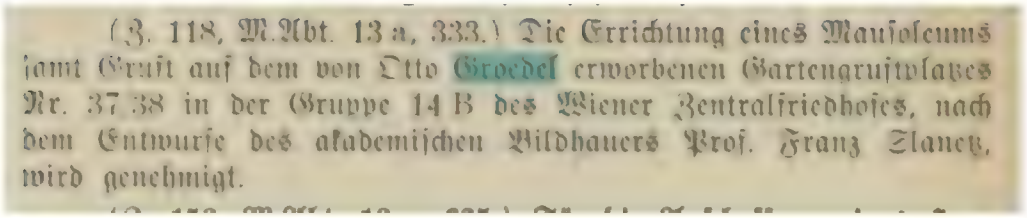
Baron Otto Groedel visited his little daughter in his wife's apartment several months ago and took the child with him because his wife was absent. A passionate fight broke out over the child. The young woman wanted to snatch the child from the father's control. A series of lawsuits were filed and the matter was first decided in the Margareten District Court. Since the couple were not divorced - a divorce suit is not pending today - the guardianship court awarded the child to the father.

In the course of the trial several witnesses were questioned. One witness, Franz Studeny, the director of the estate of Baron Hermann Groedel, who has served the Groedel family for 25 years, stated to the district court that he considered Baron Otto Groedel to be mentally abnormal and claimed that Baron Groedel had committed soldier's maltreatment during the war. Baron Otto Groedel, through his lawyer Dr. Josef Rosner, brought an action for libel on account of this allegation. The regimental commander and several officers of the field howitzer regiment No. 25 are summoned to the hearing.

This trial is a prelude to a series of other trials.

Otto Constructs a Mausoleum (1927)

(Z. 118, M.Abt. 13 a, 333.) The construction of a mausoleum including a crypt on the garden crypt site No. 37/38 acquired from Otto Groedel in group 14 B of the Vienna Central Cemetery, based on the design of the academic sculptor Prof. Franz Slanetz, is approved.


(Z. 118, M.Abt. 13 a, 333.) Die Errichtung eines Mausoleums samt Gruft auf dem von Otto Groedel erworbenen Gartengruftplatzes Nr. 37/38 in der Gruppe 14 B des Wiener Zentralfriedhofes, nach dem Entwurfe des akademischen Bildhauers Prof. Franz Slanetz, wird genehmigt.

ALBERT (jun) (1898-1968)

Figure 133.
Baron Albert Groedel (jun)

Albert was the youngest of Hermann and Melanie's eight (8) children. Born in Maramarossziget in July 1898, he graduated from Fasor high school also known as Fasori Evangélikus Gimnázium, which was a Lutheran Secondary School, a famous secondary school in Budapest located near the City Park (Városliget), and graduated from the Faculty of Law at the University of Budapest.

In 1916, Albert joined the 17th Mountain Artillery as a lieutenant. He fought on the Italian and Romanian fronts where he participated in the battles around Kolomea and Doberdo, and then in the Isonzo attacks and Piave.

His awards:

- "O1 =" Nagy ezüst vitézsegi érem = Large silver medal of gallantry
- "Kcsk =" Karoly csapatkereszt = Charles Team Cross
- "Heé =" Háborús emlékérem = War Commemorative Medal
- Bulgarian, Austrian, Tyrolean Heé: War Commemorative Medals
- Dícsérő elismerés = Honorable Recognition

He was discharged on 14 November 1918 in Budapest.

For a time afterwards he lived on the Skole estate. In 1919, he settled in Transylvania and became the director of the *Kalotaszeg Forest Industry*. He later founded the *Arboria Forest and Timber Production Company* in 1923, and was its main shareholder. In 1934, he founded the *Concordia Iparcikkek Factory*, and was the director and part owner of the factory. For a time, he lived in Cluj-Napoca at Unió-u. 27.

In 1926, the Vienna society paper, "Sports im Bild" (Sports in pictures), published an article[101] claiming that Albert and Archduchess Margarita of Austria were to be married. Her father, Archduke Leopold Salvator, noted as "...one of the most learned princes in Europe, protector of the Bohemian Academy of Sciences, Literature and Art in Prague and an honorary doctorate in technical sciences," had hunted with the Groedels in Skole, and may be how the two met. Her mother, Bianka von Castilien, was born a princess of Bourbon, from the Carlist branch of the Spanish royal family. Albert and Margarita never married,

[101] *https://anno.onb.ac.at/cgi-content/anno-plus?aid=sib&datum=19260106&query=(text:%22Margarita+von+Österreich%22)&ref=anno-search&seite=4*

and although no other European news outlet carried the story, it was reprinted by the Buffalo Courier on Sunday, April 25.

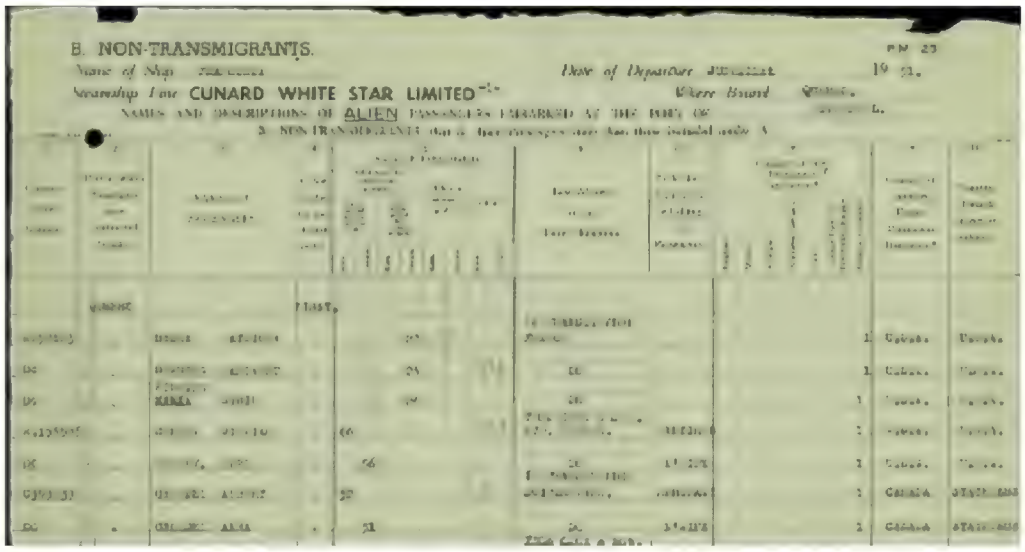
> "Vienna Society Aflutter Over Royal Engagement to Bread-Winning Baron
>
> Berlin, April 24. -Vienna society is aflutter over the report of an engagement between Archduchess Margarete of Habsburg, daughter of the former Archduke Leopold Salvator, and Baron Groedel.
>
> Though Groedel is a baron, he is the son of an industrialist whose family has been knighted only very recently, and under the sway of Emperor Franz Joseph, such an engagement would have caused a court scandal.
>
> Since the war, however, numerous Habsburgs have gone into business and trade and the engagement causes now merely a flutter.
>
> The Archduchess Margarete has been known for her democratic ideas, even under the old regime. When out of curiosity her father and his family took orchestra seats in a theater one time instead of wing to 'the royal box, her father remarked:
>
> "Curious, one sees and hears here much better than from the royal box."
>
> "I'm afraid that's true not only of the theater but of life as a whole," Margarete replied."

Margarita eventually married an Italian diplomat in 1937[102].

[102] *https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Archduchess_Margaretha_of_Austria#:~:text=Archduchess%20Margaretha%20of%20Austria%20(German,and%20Infanta%20Blanca%20of%20Spain.*

Albert married Anna Dolezal in 1934 and divorced in 1938 (most likely due to the Nazi laws). However, in 1951, a ship's manifest (Clipping 18.) shows Albert Groedel and wife Anna entering Quebec, Canada, noted as "Stateless." The ages of 52 and 51 respectively match their birth records. They were "transiting" from Switzerland. It would appear that Albert and Anna remarried after the war and wanted to become Canadian citizens. In 1968, they both appear in a Canadian "voters list," so they did manage to become citizens. Albert's occupation is listed as "chemist," which is somewhat different than his previous expertise in forestry and electrical issues (according to his bio in the "Catholic-Hungarian Almanac" from 1941[103]). His bio claims he spoke Hungarian, German, French, English, Italian and Romanian.

While in Canada in 1968, they lived at 710 Isabella St, in Rosedale, Ontario. Albert died in 1968 in Toronto, Canada, and Anna in 1973. Both are buried in Mount Pleasant Cemetery, Section 42, Lot 1564.


B. NON-TRANSMIGRANTS.

CUNARD WHITE STAR LIMITED

Clipping 18.
1951 Manifest for Albert and Anna

[103] *Albert bio 1898 - Kereszteny Magyar Kozeleti Almanach_3_Erdely_1941-1616097959__pages130-130*

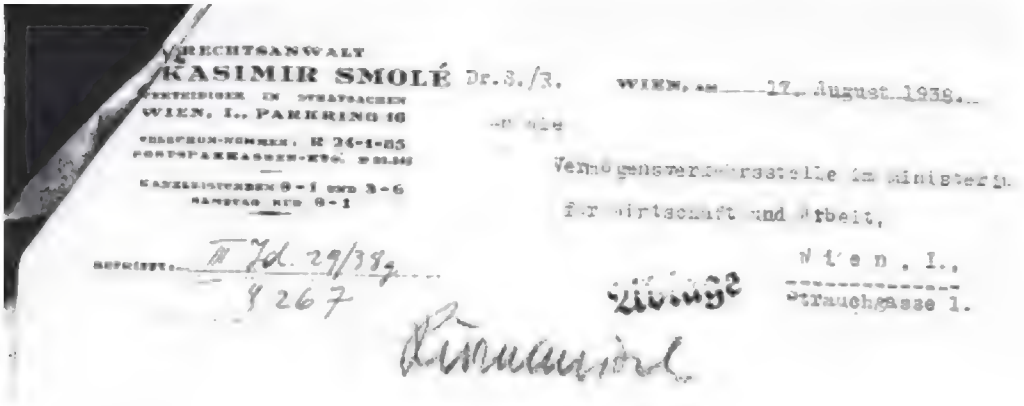
Anna Dolezal (1897 - 1973)

In 1938, the Nazis required all Jews with assets over 50,000 RM to register their property with the government. In this way, they could easily determine whose assets they wanted to steal.

In this case, Baroness Anna Groedel submitted an initial form on July 1, even though she was divorcing Albert in five days (July 6). Anna was Aryan, Catholic, and a Romanian citizen due to Albert's citizenship, so she was not required to register. However, she did so out of an abundance of caution since her then husband, Albert, was born Jewish and had Jewish grandparents.

Anna's lawyer submitted her forms, and within a few weeks received a reply from the Asset Transfer Office requesting that she must register her assets with the local office in Vienna. At that time, Anna was away in Budapest, but during her absence, on August 17, her lawyer replied to the government claiming that Anna was not required to register her assets as she was Aryan, a Romanian citizen, Catholic, and by then, had divorced Albert several weeks prior.

Figure 134. August 17, 1938


RECHTSANWALT
KASIMIR SMOLÉ
VERTEIDIGER IN STRAFSACHEN
WIEN, I., PARKRING 16
TELEPHON-NUMMER: R 24-1-85
POSTSPARKASSEN-KTO.
KANZLEISTUNDEN 9-1 UND 3-6
SAMSTAG NUR 9-1

Dr.S./R. WIEN, am 17. August 1938.

Vermögensverkehrsstelle im Ministerium
für Wirtschaft und Arbeit,
Wien, I.,
Strauchgasse 1.

Betreff: III Jd. 29/38 g
8267

17 August 1938

As the representative of Mrs. Anna Groedel, geb. Doleżal, private in Vienna III., Am Modenaplatz 3, I received your letter of August 4, 1938 III Jd. 29/38 g, number 8267 handed over.

My client left for Budapest on July 1, 1938 and has been abroad ever since.

I will get in touch with my client at the last address known to me, but I already have the honor to note the following in response to your letter.

Before her departure, my client occasionally provided me with the following proof of the reasons for the representation relationship provided:

1.) Baptism certificate from the parish office of the Birth of Mary on Rennweg in Vienna III. after which she as the legitimate daughter of Josef Dolezal, cath. Master shoemaker and Julie Czech, Catholic born on April 28th, 1897 and on May 9th, 1897 after Roman Catholic. Rite was baptized.

2.) The birth and baptism certificates of my client's parents and their marriage certificates; I have forwarded the documents mentioned under 2.) to the local group leadership of NSD 2 in Kirchstetten, where my client owns real estate, in order to provide proof of Aryan status.

3.) The baptism and marriage certificates of the four grandparents are in the course of procurement. Based on the documents presented to me, I do not doubt the purely Aryan descent of my client.

In addition, the marriage of my client to Baron Adalbert Groedel was dissolved due to the fault of the defendant Baron Adalbert Groedel, according to the certificate of July 6, 1938 of the Maramureş (Romania) court in my file, whereby "this judgment of the Prosecutor (Anna Dolezal) was granted the right to continue to bear the name of your former husband ".

According to the information given to me, my client's husband is domiciled abroad and is a Romanian citizen, as is my client, who acquired this citizenship through her marriage at the time.

As a foreigner with a foreign place of residence, my client's husband was therefore not required to register, and my client's duty to register, which, as an Aryan, could only be derived from her husband, was therefore, in my opinion, not given for this reason alone. In addition, this marriage has already been legally dissolved.

If my client nevertheless handed over the register of the property of Jews, it was only done out of special caution, so as not to be guilty of any breach of duty and without prejudice to the above facts and legal status.

I therefore ask on behalf of my client to cancel the request to offer her foreign securities, as my client does not appear to be subject to registration for the above reasons.

Heil Hitler!
[Signature]

NOTE: The dissolution of the marriage attributed to the defendant, Albert, was not necessarily due to conventional reasons such as adultery or irreconcilable differences. Within the context of German law, specifically the Nuremberg Laws, a series of discriminatory statutes introduced by Nazi Germany to oppress Jews and other non-Aryan individuals, there existed stringent restrictions on their rights and liberties. These laws, enforced from 1935 onwards, notably included a ban on marriages between Jews and Aryans. Despite their enactment, marriages entered into before the institution of these laws, like that of Albert and Anna in 1934, did not face automatic dissolution. However, couples in mixed marriages faced significant societal pressure to divorce, especially if the non-Jewish partner was female. This pressure often stemmed from the threat of job loss or property confiscation due to Nazi policies of Aryanization. It's noteworthy that Anna retained her married name, Groedel, after the divorce, suggesting that the dissolution may have been compelled more by external financial pressures imposed by the Nazi regime rather than personal fault or family discord.

The Nazi Reply to Anna's asset declaration.

Based on § 7 of the ordinance on the registration of the assets of Jews of April 26, 1938 (Reichsgesetzbl. I p. 414), I request you, with the authorization of the representative for the four-year plan, to register your assets on the basis of the aforementioned ordinance to offer registered foreign securities to the Reichsbank office in Vienna responsible for your place of residence or place of habitual residence and to sell them at their request.

The offer must be made no later than one week after delivery of this request.

The state commissioner in the private sector

[Signature]

My former husband is a Romanian citizen, just like me.

Since I am an Aryan and my obligation to register can therefore only be derived from my former husband's affiliation with the Jewish race, I am not required to register despite my domestic residence

a) my husband himself is not legally responsible and

b) the problem has already been solved. Nevertheless, out of caution and without prejudice, I have invested my assets domestically.

THE GROEDEL FAMILY FEUD

Figure 135.

Melanie and children (missing are Irén and Albert) ca. 1896

During the interwar period of the 1920s, prosperity smiled upon both the business and the family. The lumber industry experienced a revival under Hermann's leadership in a timber consortium, Carpetina, leading to prices rising to unprecedented levels by 1925. The family relished delightful moments mingling with Europe's upper echelons, actively participating in the equestrian world, embarking on travels, engaging in hunting, partaking in polo matches, buying expensive cars, and indulging in the excitement of gambling in Paris and Monte Carlo.

The family thrived, expanding its influence by forging political and societal connections. Paula had entered matrimony with the prominent Lonyay family, known for its political standing, while Stefie became part of the Baron Koenigswarter family. Irén, after a two-year union with Andras Kussivich, joined the Sváb family of landowners. Cousin Hans tied the knot with Marie-Christine von Callenberg, and eventually inherited the largest textile business in Europe, "Hermann Pollack Söhne" from his late uncle, Otto Pollack-Parnegg.

These unions and businesses solidified the family's stature within wealthy and well-connected circles. Meanwhile, Baron Richard regularly scheduled hunts for Europe's elite, while also delivering presentations to students and others in Skole, sharing his expertise in managing extensive timber properties.

However, ominous clouds gathered once more. Hermann, a notable player with substantial investments in the stock market, faced a severe setback with the crash on October 28 and 29, 1929, famously known as "Black Monday" and "Black Tuesday." Although the specific stocks and funds affected remain unknown, the family's fortune suffered a significant blow as the Dow Jones index plummeted by a combined 25% on those two fateful days, marking the onset of a prolonged market decline that persisted through 1932. Although specific figures for the Hungarian market are difficult to pinpoint, the Dow Jones Industrial Average lost nearly 89% of its value from its peak in 1929 to its bottom in 1932. Historical accounts suggest that the losses in Hungary were comparable to declines in major global markets.

While the family's wealth decreased, countless others faced financial ruin. Despite an apparent loss of funds, Hermann navigated through the aftermath, as the full impact of the Depression would not reach Hungary and the lumber business until the subsequent year.

On November 29, 1930, thirteen months after the stock market crash, amid the Depression's grip on the lumber industry and when the price of lumber reached its lowest point, Hermann, then 74, succumbed to a heart attack, a possible outcome of the stress he must have been enduring. His demise occurred at a critical juncture for both the business and the family, as Hermann had been the linchpin holding it all together. With the company's fortunes rapidly deteriorating due to the global depression and Hermann's absence to mitigate the challenges, the trajectory of family life underwent a profound and lasting transformation. The depression not only took a toll on their wealth but also irreversibly reshaped the dynamics of their familial relationships.

In the 1920s, the Groedel Brothers was a thriving concern. The holding company, Carpetina, in which the family was a major stockholder, was making a good profit and paying a high dividend to its shareholders, while 1925 was the most favorable year after the First World War. Exports went to Bulgaria, Hungary, Palestine, Cyprus, Greece, Syria, Egypt, France, Britain, Germany and the USA.

However, the crisis in the early 1930s saw the output of Carpetina drop by 65% from its high in 1925, although by 1935 production had risen to 60% of its 1925 output. Still a far cry from its heyday.

Despite the earlier expectation that his late nephew, Arthur, would ascend to the role of CEO, Bernhard was elected to lead the business after Hermann's passing. However, in the ensuing months, it was Richard who emerged as the de facto leader of one of Europe's most influential and prosperous enterprises. It didn't go well.

In contrast to his father, Richard lacked the business acumen, temperament, personality, and the extensive political and financial connections that had characterized Hermann's leadership. As greed, power struggles, and ego began to influence Richard's decision-making, his relationships with various family members soured. Hermann, adhering to the philosophy that his sons should not join the business until the age of twenty-two, may have intended to foster well-rounded individuals beyond the realm of the lumber industry. However, this patriarchal approach may have inadvertently hindered Richard's education in business finance, interpersonal relationships, and family priorities.

Hermann's frequent travels, though indicative of his commitment as a caring father and husband, left a gap in providing the personalized education his children needed to excel as compassionate and successful businessmen. The consequences of this educational delay became apparent as Richard grappled with the complexities of leading a business that had previously thrived under his father's guidance.

Nevertheless, Richard was thrust into challenging times with his father's death, the global depression significantly impacting the business that ran on bank loans (which were being called in), the depressed price of lumber, rampant inflation of the local currency (the pengo,) and a significant reduction in product demand. To that, add the problem of how to keep the company afloat, pay its employees, and pay the monthly inheritance sums demanded by each family member who wished to maintain the living standards they had all become accustomed to. Within two years, by 1932, the company had lost half its value. To be fair, some of it was lost under Hermann's rule in the stock market crash of 1929 and in a money-losing furniture manufacturing business, but Richard could not stop the slide, albeit by 1935 it did slow.

In the years leading up to his demise, Hermann established two Swiss holding companies, amalgamating business assets under the names Internationale Trust A.G (ITAG) and Columbia Trust A.G., with himself maintaining control over the shares. In a stroke of foresight, Melanie was granted signature authority in the event of his sudden demise, which, unfortunately, came to pass. Following Hermann's death, Melanie assumed exclusive signature authority for the trusts, wielding some control over specific entities within them, including the Romanian timber consortium Carpetina, which had taken control over the facility in Kommando. Hermann's will, composed of three primary codicils and six additional ones spanning from 1925 to the day preceding his death, ensured that the diverse businesses remained consolidated and were not dispersed among his heirs. Hermann firmly believed that safeguarding the substantial fortunes spread across various countries necessitated centralization and unity to avert collapse.

Hermann's will, though brief, stipulated an equal distribution among family members, entitling each to one-seventh of the estate. However, a notable exception existed in that the boys retained control over the business, while Melanie retained signature authority. Hermann's bequests included 50,000 Swiss francs each for his grandchildren (about $165k in 2025), a modest dowry of 150,000 Swiss francs for Stefie upon her marriage, and the allocation of 800 acres of property for Paula and Istvan. Strikingly, Irén was not mentioned, receiving no specified provision. Notably, the codicils failed to delineate a framework for the distribution of the estate to cover everyday living expenses, and failed to establish monthly stipends.

To address the uncertainties surrounding roles and financial compensation, the family gathered at a lawyer's office in Vienna on December 17, 1930, a few weeks after Hermann's passing. Despite resistance from Richard and Albert who were against the meeting and who sought to maintain control, they were outvoted. In this meeting, Bernhard was elected as the new CEO, yet the practical management of the business remained largely under Richard's purview as noted previously.

The family finalized an extensive contract outlining their arrangements. It was agreed that the boys would oversee the business operations, while Melanie would maintain signature authority. While Melanie did not have a direct role in the day-to-day management of the business, her control was expressed through

her signature authority. Furthermore, the company was bound by the condition that major transactions required unanimous approval from Richard's siblings, his mother, and Uncle Bernhard. In terms of financial distribution from their inheritance, the siblings and Melanie agreed to receive the following:

- Each sibling would receive 48,000 Swiss francs/year ($290k in 2025 dollars), but the girl's funds would come from the boy's share of the assets (since we don't have a copy of the agreement, it's not clear how that would work or how the boys would fund themselves)
- Melanie would receive 96,000 Swiss francs/year ($580k in 2025)
- Otto, Richard and Albert would administer the estate (Bernhard was peripherally involved, but there is no information on his compensation, if any, since he already owned some percentage of the business.)

The boys would receive an additional 43,000 Swiss francs/yr to manage the assets, plus additional travel expenses for first-class travel, plus 20% additional per diem. No consideration was given to the girls' and mother's travel expenses or per diem. It was not expected that they would travel for business purposes.

The primary rationale behind Hermann's decision not to grant immediate inheritances or stipends to each child and Melanie was outlined in his codicil dated February 6, 1930 (refer below). At that time, Hermann found himself heavily indebted to banks in London, and his priority was to settle these debts before disbursing any inheritance to family members. The stipulation was that funds could only be distributed if everyone agreed, which predictably occurred given the collective need to cover various expenses. However, it remains unclear whether the company adhered to Hermann's intention of settling the London debts before the agreement, with newspaper reports suggesting otherwise.

Codicils

KODIZILL. (December 24, 1929)

In amendment of my earlier testamentary provision, it is hereby determined, after the most careful consideration, that my dear wife shall be placed on an equal footing with my six children, i.e. she shall have a share of one seventh in the estate, she shall have no influence whatsoever on the management of the business, which shall be exclusively vested in my sons.

Written and signed by my own hand.

Budapest, December twenty-fourth one thousand nine hundred and twenty-nine.

Hermann Groedel m. p.

CODICIL. (February 6, 1930)

In view of my larger debt in London, I hereby decree by last will and testament that my sons shall have exclusive administration of my estate and that none of my heirs may take money from the estate without the consent of my sons; should one or the other heir nevertheless demand money, the person concerned shall be placed on compulsory share without delay. However, no one can receive money as long as all debts in London have not been paid, since my heirs may only demand and receive money from their inheritance after payment of my debts and those of the company Gebrüder Groedel. Viktor Königswarter, whom I previously appointed as co-administrator in the event of the death of one of my three sons, is hereby stripped of this contingent position.

Written and signed by my own hand. Budapest, sixth of February one thousand nine hundred and thirty.

Hermann Groedel m. p.
CODICIL. (November 28, 1930)

In a previous codicil, I decreed that I bequeath a legacy of 200,000 Swiss francs to my granddaughter Zora v. Kussevich. Herewith I amend this disposition of mine in such a way that I reduce the amount of the bequest to 50,000 (fifty thousand) sv. francs.

At the same time I hereby bequeath as legacy to my grandchildren Baroness Märy Groedel, Mariette v. Lónyay and Baroness Vera Elisabeth Königswarter individually 50,000-50,000 (fifty thousand-fifty thousand) sv. francs each. So together the four granddaughters will receive 200,000 (two hundred thousand) Swiss francs.

However, my above-mentioned granddaughters are not entitled to claim the security of the legacy from my heirs.

While my granddaughters are minors, they will only receive - the interest of the legacy after my death until they reach the age of majority. They will receive the amount itself only - after they have reached the age of majority.

Budapest, November 28, 1930.
Hermann Groedel m. p.

For approximately a year and a half, the boys adhered to the agreement, fulfilling the monthly stipend as stipulated. However, around May 1932, they halted the payments, citing the severe decline in the business's profitability during the Depression, particularly marked by the lowest point in the stock market in that year.

Simultaneously, family relations deteriorated further. It is unclear whether Richard was misogynistic, or if he just wanted to keep the women "in their place" and out of his business, but his attitude caused a significant upheaval within the family. In addition to discontinuing the monthly stipend, the boys insisted that their mother, Melanie, surrender her signatory rights, a demand she refused. The ability of a woman (and mother) to have discretionary influence over their business decisions, infuriated Richard and Albert. The brothers aimed for complete control of the business; a stance met with firm resistance from the three girls who steadfastly supported their mother's position. In the midst of this familial discord, Albert declared that ***no one would receive any payment as long as their mother refused to accept the condition and relinquish her rights.*** At this juncture, what began as a family quarrel escalated into a full-fledged war.

As reported by the newspaper Magyar Hirlap on October 20, 1932, the price of lumber reached its low point in November 1930, coinciding with Hermann's passing. However, by 1932, as prices stabilized, the company still generated an income (though it's not explicit whether this refers to revenue or profit) of approximately $41 million per year in 2023 dollars.

Newspapers filled their pages with articles detailing the financial bleeding occurring worldwide. Here is an example mentioning the Groedel business:

Kassai Ujsag, May 13, 1933

Twilight of Money Kings

[In a discussion of the quickly sinking Austrian banking system during the Depression, the following was written...]

Here is the case of the Grödel group; hundreds and hundreds of millions have been lost in the timber business over the last few years. The final accounts for Grödel have not yet been settled, but insiders claim that the difficulties in Lower Austria are to some extent due to the Grödel group.

Regrettably, Richard's business acumen, temperament, and judgment fell short of his father's, a sentiment equally applicable to young Albert. With Hermann no longer present to guide their aspirations and regulate their conduct, it seems that Richard and Albert's eagerness to assert control over the business, their female siblings and mother gained precedence.

Bernhard, now in his mid-70s and still affiliated with the administration, seemed disinterested in actively engaging in business affairs. He allowed Richard and Albert the latitude to make decisions as they saw fit, even permitting the possibility of selling the entire business—a course of action they pursued but were ultimately overruled.

As the company's fortunes dwindled, it was only a matter of time before things started to unravel. Richard found himself compelled to make swift decisions to salvage the business, grappling with the absence of available credit due to the widespread failure of banks and mounting demands from creditors. In some instances, creditor banks found it best to convert their financial claims into company shares to maintain some control over their investments. Despite these challenges, the family retained control. But a large bump in the road ahead threatened to put the business into complete turmoil.

The bank Niederösterreichische Escompte Gesellschaft (Lower Austria Discount Company) insisted on the repayment of 7 million Swiss francs ($26 million in 2025) from the group as the bank was quickly failing and trying to survive. Meanwhile, the confluence of lower Depression-induced demand, inflation, and currency devaluation exacted a substantial financial toll. Uncle Albert, who had been relieved of his duties by Hermann years before, had recently spent time in a sanitarium due to significant gambling debts that had crippled his finances and drained the company's resources. Subsequently, he was relocated to Skole to keep him at a distance.

In the interim was the Castiglioni offer.

Mr. Castiglioni, akin to a contemporary mergers and acquisitions expert, stepped in as a financial strategist when he learned that the Niederösterreichische Escompte Gesellschaft was demanding 7 million Swiss francs from the group. Acting as a potential "white knight" to rescue the business, he reached out to Richard to discuss available options.

In the autumn, a crucial conference convened at the trust fund headquarters in Switzerland, attended by all family members, including the seemingly disinterested Bernhard, said to be engrossed in reading newspapers during this pivotal meeting. Although Bernhard voted, his level of comprehension about the decisions at hand remained uncertain. Castiglioni, having previously reached an understanding with Richard and young Albert, presented a clear proposal to the family. He offered to pay each son 170,000 Swiss francs ($560,000), allowing them to retain a 50 percent stake in the group's business. Simultaneously, the Groedel women—Melanie and her three daughters—were proposed to receive 400,000 Swiss francs ($1.3M) each as 'severance pay,' relinquishing their share of the inheritance. Notably, these 400,000 francs were not guaranteed as an immediate cash payout but were anticipated to be disbursed over the long term, with only 80,000 francs ($264,000 in 2025) available in cash. In exchange for settling the debts, Castiglioni sought unrestricted control over the group's assets.

During the conference, Richard, Albert, and the seemingly disinterested Bernhard—noted as distracted by the horse racing results—voted in favor of the proposal, indicating their desire to sell the business. As an added incentive, Paula's husband, Istvan Lonyay, would be appointed to the board of directors of ITAG, with the promise of an additional modest sum.

However, Melanie staunchly rejected the offer, joined by Otto, Stefie, and Irén. According to the family contract's points IV and V, which dictated that group assets could only be disposed of by unanimous agreement, a single dissenting vote from any heir was sufficient to thwart the proposal. Castiglioni, unwilling to sweeten the deal with a more enticing financial incentive, lead to the dismissal of his elaborate proposal.

In reality, Castiglioni's offer was impractical since it would have resulted in a total payout of 1.6 million Swiss francs ($6.5 million in 2025) as "final compensation" to the four women, while acquiring property worth at least 56 to 60 million francs ($246 million) after settling the debts. The properties in Skole, encompassing lavishly furnished castles, timbered estates, farm buildings, and holiday homes, were conservatively valued at 80 million ($329M 2025). While castles, carvings, silverware, bronze statues, art treasures, and trees may not be consumable, the land, with its castles and all its assets provided a sense of security that did not slip away as easily as 500 million shillings (nearly

$1.75B[104] in 2025) worth of shares had slipped from Castiglioni's grasp in less than three years.

It isn't clear as to how or when the company repaid the bank its demand for seven million Swiss francs.

The Coup

Richard and Albert were desperate to control the business and the money. In the midst of the business's ailing condition, the two brothers took a drastic and underhanded approach to seize absolute control, ignoring the explicit consent requirement laid out in Hermann's will and agreed upon in the family contract shortly after Hermann's demise. Frustrated by their mother's refusal to relinquish her signature authority and their sisters' supportive stance, Richard and Albert orchestrated an illicit and forceful takeover. They spearheaded a coup.

Early in 1931, just after the family agreement was signed the previous December, and without informing Melanie and their three sisters, trustees Otto, Richard, and Albert arranged a general meeting at the Swiss office where the trust was headquartered. In a meeting rife with deception, they falsified records, asserting that all shareholders were present when only three of the seven were in attendance (the three brothers). Subsequently, they voted to remove their mother from the board and falsely claimed that she had waived her rights to signature authority, which she had not. Building on this fabricated story, they passed resolutions that entirely disregarded the rights of other heirs and shareholders, improperly ousting Melanie from her position of authority. With these actions, the brothers solidified their control over the trusts, the business and the lives of their family. The only way to stop them at that point, was in court.

Melanie: A Silent Force

Melanie remains one of the more enigmatic figures in the family's story. Unlike Hermann, whose letters offer a range of insights into his thoughts and emotions, or Richard, whose arrogance, need for control, and mismanagement hastened the business's decline, Melanie left behind few traces of her personality. Aside from a single letter written to daughter Irén (several pages below),

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[104] *All monetary calculations were performed by CHATgpt.*

there is little that reveal her motivations, nor did she publicly assert herself in a way that would have drawn the attention of journalists. Yet, her actions in the years following Hermann's death suggest a woman of quiet but unwavering strength.

While she may not have wielded financial authority in the same way as her husband or sons, Melanie was not a passive figure in the family's affairs. In an era when wealthy widows were often expected to yield business control to male relatives, she resisted. Hermann had entrusted her with signature authority over key financial trusts—an extraordinary level of power for a woman of her time—and when Richard and Albert demanded that she relinquish it, she refused. This defiance suggests that she understood both the significance of her role and the consequences of allowing her sons unchecked control. Even as financial pressures mounted and her sons sought to limit her influence, she remained steadfast in her position. As tensions escalated, her sons' relentless pressure to remove her authority only grew stronger, setting the stage for one of the most bitter and emotionally wrenching conflicts in the family's history.

Her daughters stood by her, another telling indicator of her influence. In a family riven by greed and betrayal, the Groedel women—Stephanie, Paula, and Irén—united behind their mother. Whether out of love, loyalty, or shared self-preservation, their support suggests that Melanie was not merely a symbolic matriarch, but an active source of stability and leadership. Even as her authority came under relentless attack, she remained a presence in the family battle, urging her daughters to continue pressing for their rightful inheritance.

Though the historical record offers little in her own words, Melanie was resilient. She witnessed the rise and fall of a great fortune, the decline of a family legacy, and the increasing divisions within her own family, including the betrayal of her own sons. She resisted efforts to strip her of authority and maintained her position for as long as she could. However, the ongoing conflict over control of the business placed her in a difficult position. Even so, her determination—and the opposition from Richard and Albert—reflects her significance in the family's history.

Predictably, news of the boys' actions couldn't remain concealed. Melanie and the girls were shocked upon learning of the illegitimate meeting and promptly voiced their protests against the decisions made. In response to their sisters'

objections, Richard and Albert issued a written statement assuring the revocation of the resolutions. However, they grossly breached this promise, never truly intending to reverse their decisions. They intentionally mislead their mother and sisters by falsely stating that the minutes of the general meeting, which included the cancellation of their mother's signing rights, would be annulled, and the resolutions would not be executed. Melanie and the girls, reassured by these assurances, did not pursue the matter further. Despite the trustees signing and delivering the aforementioned revocation declaration, it was never executed and in December 1931, a notice surfaced in the Swiss official gazette affirming the finality of decisions made in the ITAG and Columbia assemblies, which had been convened using false information. To be clear, the boys won.

Continued to be frustrated by their mother's refusal to comply with their desires, the boys retaliated with further hostility. They exacerbated the discord by commencing eviction proceedings against their mother in the Lendvay house and also filed a lawsuit for non-payment of heating costs. Considering that the monthly stipends for the girls and their mother had gone unpaid for at least the last five months, it is likely that Melanie had been unable to meet her rent or heating bill obligations (apparently, the house had been sold to the trust and then leased back).

I.

Honorable Royal District Court! The widow of Baron Hermann Groedel rents an apartment and garage from us at Lendvay-utca 26. in the lower level of our house. As the tenant has not fulfilled her obligation to pay her rent, in our letter of March 8, 1932, we called for the payment of her rent in arrears by stating that if she has not fulfilled her obligation within one day, the tenancy would be terminated due to non-payment.

As the tenant did not comply with our requirement, Pp. Pursuant to Section 621 of the Act, No. 26, Lendvay Street, the occupation of the apartment and garage rented in the house is hereby terminated beginning on August 1, 1932, due to non-payment of rent, and we kindly request our lawyer under A) to notify the tenant with the order that she is obliged to hand over the rental property to us emptied.

The rental property is subject to free disposal. The value of the subject of the proceedings is 5600 pengos.

Sincerely,

Internationale Trust A. G.

II.

Esteemed Royal District Court!

The widow of Baron Hermann Groedel, Mrs. Melanie Weiner, rents a flat in the house at 26 Lendvay Street VI, which is our property. There is a dispute between us as to the amount our tenant is obliged to pay for central heating and hot water. Therefore, we hereby bring an action under Article 9(5) of the Housing Ordinance to determine the amount of the central heating charge.

For the time being, we ask for the assessment of the central heating charge on the basis of the effective expenditure of last year, but we note that in 1932 the effective expenditure on heating may be lower than in the previous year, because the tenants did not spend part of the year in Budapest and therefore did not have to heat the villa permanently.

We expressly and emphatically reserve our right to raise the heating levy further if, as is likely, the effective cost for the current heating season would be higher than in the previous year.

Finally, we note that prior to bringing this action, we communicated the facts set forth in this action to the defendant and requested that she voluntarily accept our position as set forth in this action. However, Defendant has refused to pay more in heating charges than she has been paying.

Sincerely,

Internationale Trust A.-G.

Having been forced out of her house on Lendvay ut 26 by her sons Richard and Albert, Melanie moved to the house in Máramarossziget. But even there, Richard sent an order to the staff that his mother could not remove a flower in the garden nor eat a vegetable she did not pay for. Finally, under duress and coercion, Melanie reluctantly signed a written waiver of her rights, leading to the resumption of stipend payments for her and the girls. This suggests that the

business was financially capable of covering the stipends, contradicting Richard's claims about dire profitability. Notably, Irén received no stipend, but her husband, János, was appointed to the board to secure some financial compensation.

Upon discovering that her mother had been compelled to waive her rights through extortion, Irén expressed her protest in a letter to Richard in Vienna on May 22. As was her customary practice, she sent copies of the letter to all her siblings, asserting that "the procedure followed against us was ordinary extortion."

The letter reads as follows:

Mr. Richard Groedel, Vienna.

Your stylistic exercise addressed to me v. 17. Ds. really did not interest me, but since it is purely about my private affairs, I must emphasize that these do not concern you at all.

Your benevolent intentions, which you emphasize towards me, as well as your altruistic, shameless attitude, sound to me almost like blackmailing threats. It is true that our brother Albert had warned me before you describing your character concerning ethics and business. At that time, I could not believe him, if only because you said the same thing about his person. I believed in your words all the more since I was on purely friendly terms with you until that time but did not have anything to do with you in financial matters.

Your letters and intrigues directed at me and others opened my eyes, and now I see clearly that I have entrusted my entire fortune to a person hostile to me.

Your actions force me to state that you declare yourself as an enemy, and against my enemies, it is my duty, already for the sake of my children, to protect myself.

When you were invited to my house the other day, I told you I will not tolerate injustice. Your threats will miss the target and will never intimidate me.

Your sister IRENE. Budapest, February 22, 1932.

Sibling vs Sibling

Shortly afterward, Richard filed a lawsuit against his sister and mother, and vice versa. Richard filed against Iren and Melanie for defamation, and Irén, Melanie and Lajos Korbuly (Dóra's husband) against Richard and the company for fraud. In late October, the defamation lawsuit was heard, but the lawsuit for fraud was dismissed.

The following is Irén's testimony:

Accused: on February 22, 1932, I wrote a letter to my brother Richard Groedel, a copy of which I sent to my mother and to my siblings Paula, Stefania, Otto and Albert.

Judge Dr. Wamoscher: Do you feel guilty?

Defendant: No

Judge Wamoscher: Could this matter not be settled peacefully?

Defendant: No. There is nothing to settle peacefully. I wrote the letter because I was terribly upset. I loved my brother very much, I would have put my hand in fire for him. When my father died, we appointed him and my other brothers as trustees of the family estate. But he did things that made me very angry. He behaved so unbelievably towards my mother and my sisters and did things. I told my brother a long time ago that you can't do things like that to my mother. My brother never bothered about business and my father spared my mother so much excitement. The moment my brothers came into the fortune, they wanted to spin me off. They wouldn't give me a penny. The contract was signed by all, that each would take a certain sum out of the fortune. We got that for a while and then one time we had a fight. The trouble was that my mother was a signatory in the company and they had thrown my mother out in a fake general meeting. My mother was not a business manager, but wanted to be objective as a mother over her children. Itag. is where all the wealth is, it's concentrated. Then we saw that if we publish this and let my mother be exposed, we are completely played out, because some of the wealth is in Poland, some in Romania and everywhere else. The company made it impossible for me to get a lawyer in Switzerland and Romania. It's easy for them to buy a lawyer because companies have lawyers everywhere and we pay for that lawyer out of our own money; out of our seven, just like our brothers. I was so outraged by all this that I wrote a letter. But it was not only we who were to be deprived of our property, but also the grandchildren of the daughters, who were not to receive their share of the money.

Figure 136.
Irén Groedel

Ellenőr: October 28, 1932

Family differences between Baron Richard Groedel and Baroness Irén Groedel, have given rise to several lawsuits, one of which was heard by the Budapest Criminal Court on Wednesday noon, presided over by Judge Dr. Wamoscher. Baroness Irén Groedel appeared in the courtroom dressed in a delicately simple manner, in pure black, with a gray cap on her head, without lipstick or jewelry. She held a fine sealskin purse in her hand and looked intently at the small audience, which included a representative of foreign lenders from Budapest. The Baroness was defended by Dr Kornél Fenyő Soma and Dr Fenyő gave a detailed account of the events. He explained that unfounded lawsuits had been brought against the mother and her daughters and that the two Groedel brothers had planned a "system of expropriation," not only failing to pay the defendants the 4,000 francs a month but also failing to give her children anything, although they were obliged to do so. In addition, the Groedel brothers also wanted Mrs Sváb, to drop the lawsuit she had brought against the Swiss holding company.

As the circumstances show, the lawyer said, the co-owners of the $50 million fortune want to starve the family members living in Hungary [Richard and Albert were living in Vienna -jz]. Finally, the lawyer also asked for the business books to be produced so that the court could see whether the management was in reliable hands and whether there was any justification for not paying the maintenance.

Dr. Miksa Teller[105], lawyer for Richard Groedel, then presented. According to him, Baron Groedel's plant employs 15,000 people and since the chief executive died before the outbreak of the economic crisis, the current owners are unable to pay their high support. [According to reports, once Melanie surrendered her authority, the company resumed the stipend payments, contradicting the claim the company was unable to make the support payments. -jz]

In fact, the background to the lawsuit here is material, but a whole host of lawsuits have been filed against Groedel companies and holding companies, which, as a result, the Swiss holding company, in particular, have been put in a bad position because of the forgery reports in Switzerland. The holding was filed and the lawsuit was not withdrawn even today. Civil lawsuits have also been filed against the holding company in Switzerland and several lawsuits are pending in Budapest. Their

[105]*Father of Edward Teller, who is known as the father of the hydrogen bomb and an early member of the Manhattan project to develop the atom bomb.*

creditors did not even react to all these lawsuits, showing they have full confidence in today's company management. However, it is only natural that this is why company leaders need to keep the big interests of the company in mind and make appropriate savings. After Dr. Teller's speech, Judge Wamoscher adjourned the extremely interesting hearing and ordered additional evidence be brought.

Magyar Hirlap, November 10, 1932

The criminal proceedings in a defamation lawsuit of Baroness Irén Groedel and her mother have been terminated.

The defamation lawsuit, which has long occupied the court accused Baroness Irén Groedel, against whom her brother, Baron Groedel Richard, filed a complaint. Regardless of this pending lawsuit, proceedings were instituted against Mrs. Sváb and her mother for defamation before the authorities. The background to the case is that the Swiss limited company International Trust AG, whose shares were owned by Baron Hermann Groedel and which became the property of his children and widow after the Baron's death, convened an extraordinary general meeting in March last year and decided to remove Baroness Groedel [Melanie] from the board, and replaced by her sons. Mrs. Groedel and her daughter, upon learning of this, filed a complaint against unknown perpetrators for forgery.

On this basis, proceedings were initiated against Adolf Jahoda, the Managing Director of the joint stock company. The prosecutor's office later terminated the proceedings against Jahoda and at that time Jahoda filed a complaint against Mrs. Groedel and her daughter. This case was discussed on Wednesday by the district judge Endre Wamoscher. The prosecutor eventually dropped the charges against her and her mother, who did not appear at the trial. The principal prosecutor took over the substitute prosecution against Baroness Iren alone, but the district judge terminated the proceedings against both defendants on the grounds that if one of the defendants had been dropped, this would affect the other defendants as well.

The newspapers concluded their coverage of the family dispute and legal battles at this point, leaving us unaware of the resolutions. It remains unclear whether the siblings continued to receive their stipends, if Melanie regained her signature authority (indications suggest otherwise), and whether the company faced additional legal actions for fraud and forgery. Despite the uncertainties, it is evident that the company chaotically navigated through these challeng-

ing periods. By 1934, a reorganization became necessary to settle outstanding debts, but the family retained control even after the restructuring.

Regrettably, the family's financial troubles persisted beyond business restructurings and family legal disputes. In 1935, the Romanian federal government initiated legal action against the Máramaros courts, alleging underpayment of inheritance taxes to the state.

Universul – March 17, 1935

Ministry of Finance lawsuit against Groedel House

Sighet, 14 March – The appeal of the Ministry of Finance against the sentence of the Maramureș court, by which the estate of Baron Herman Groedel, consisting of huge forests located in the Maramureș region, was valued at 8 million lei and, at the same time, an inheritance tax in the amount of 350 thousand lei was fixed, came before the Court of Appeal of Oradea. D. Victor Țăranu, inspector-general, on behalf of the Ministry of Finance, pointed out that the estate left by Baron Groedel and inherited by his sons far exceeded the amount at which it was valued. He showed with figures how much the tax authorities had taxed this wealth and noted that the Groedel institution had paid taxes on an annual income of 4–5 million. Compared to such an income, the inherited wealth must have been much higher. Groedel's lawyer replied that the estate had been assessed by the court in full knowledge of the facts. The Court of Appeal referred the case back to the Maramures court for a further evaluation by official experts.

Continuing into 1937, the company's future continued to fade:

Ellenzék – January 3, 1937

New negotiations have begun with the creditors of the Groedel Group.

Further negotiations have started between the owners and creditors of Groedel, a logging company. The Groedel conglomerate, which has significant interests in the Cluj area, entered into an agreement with its creditors about three years ago. According to the agreement, representatives of the creditors also have a say in the management of Groedel companies, and during the validity of the agreement, the assets of the company can only be liquidated and sold under certain conditions. This agreement expires on February 14, 1937, and accordingly, new negotiations are commencing between the Groedel Group and the creditors.

On March 1, 1937, the Transsilvaniai Futár published the following article:

Uncertainty surrounds the fate of the Grödel companies The real causes of Carpatina's losses lie in the private deals of individual directors

The Baron Grödel family's industrial credentials in Romania are represented by two large timber companies, SWAG and Carpatina. The former is controlled by CEO Steinberger from the "Phoenix" mansion of Piaţa Rosetti, while the latter is helmed by CEO Fenyves from behind the padded lips of his stately bohemian mansion on Strada Bacaloglu. These two companies make up the bulk of the Grödel dynasty's fortune, which, as every sparrow in Rosetti Square has been chirping, has been thoroughly battered over the last five or six years. The two companies, and with them the family's very existence, were saved from withering away only by a generous injection of British capital. The British capital did not, of course, rush to the aid of the Grödel group for sentimental reasons. It demanded a pledge. Both companies, with all their assets, are now owned by creditors rather than their nominal owners.

The Family War Goes Nuclear

On May 15, 1942, Lajos Korbuly had reported Richard to the chief of police for "misappropriation" and other crimes, based on Richard's poor, unethical, and deceptive business practices while running Gebrüder Groedel. Korbuly and other family members claimed Richard was not forthcoming with information about the company's revenue to its shareholders and creditors and had allegedly forged additional documents as had reportedly been done in the early 1930s.

For an extended period, Korbuly, holding a 15% stake in the lumber business through his management of Bernhard's, and later, Margit's estate after Bernhard passed away in 1936, had, as a proxy, persistently sought access to the company's financial records alongside Irén (based on her mother's wishes), without success. Moreover, allegations surfaced that Richard was misappropriating funds for personal use, including an instance of openly pilfering money from his brother, Albert. While Richard had initially agreed to disclose the financial records to address investors' concerns, he procrastinated and failed to provide the requested information. Korbuly had previously lodged numerous complaints with Hungarian authorities regarding Richard's business practices, but the government's lack of action left Korbuly and Irén feeling frustrated.

On March 24, 1942, Melanie wrote a letter to her daughter Irén that included a number of subjects. One subject was Richard:

Dear Irene,

Even today, I can't fathom how excited I was when Paula arrived. But unfortunately she leaves on Friday. I can't hold her back, after all she has a family too, especially since Láli is gone. I would have liked Deliné to have traveled with her, but she doesn't want to leave me alone now. I'm better now, but I'm still very nervous and the nervousness is very bad for my heart. I have no greater desire than to settle with the bank - the sooner the better, because the situation will always get worse. I would like it if Richard resigned as the Groedel brothers' procurator, He wants to get the woman back at all costs[106]. I think it's too late for this plan. Otto does not recognize his power of attorney either.. I think it's too late for this plan. Otto does not recognize his power of attorney either.

...I don't know why Richard hired the lawyer who works for you. After all, Richard has always worked against our interests. I don't want to be in communication with Richard under any circumstances. He caused me too much excitement and sorrow and harm. You young people can't understand this, just like me, father was very excited before his death, and so am I now with him[107]. I don't even want to hear about the couple. Please take care of our case a little. Even if you don't need it, it's in our common interest.

Sometime in the fall of 1942, Richard was notified of the report to the Hungarian authorities, and on August 25, he retained a lawyer, Dr. Nándor Bernolák, whom he used to represent him in several cases through 1944. An expense list created by the lawyer for "Richard Groedel's judicial matters" on July 8, 1947, provides insight, a timeline, and additional details about several lawsuits.

Two days after Richard hired the lawyer, they met at police headquarters, where it was learned that a criminal investigation had been requested against Richard. Three days later, they met at The Court of Discipline with the prosecutor and investigating judge.

Richard and his lawyer met several times between September 1942 and January 1943 when the request for a criminal investigation by Korbuly was rejected by

[106] *This might be a reference to Richard and Valerie's divorce.*

[107] *This might be a reference to Richard and Valerie's divorce.*

the court. In the middle of February, Richard's attorney submitted a report to the police chief [contents unknown].

In March–May 1943, there were repeated meetings at police headquarters and the prosecutor's office.

- On March 22, a hearing occurred at the Court of Discipline against Richard regarding Korbuly's libel/slander/defamation lawsuit. This is a lawsuit separate from the one for misappropriation.
- On May 22, the prosecutor halted the investigation in the misappropriation case.
- On June 7, a hearing in the Court of Discipline in the defamation case. On the same day, Korbuly and Iren filed an additional charge of forgery against Richard.
- On July 12, an additional proceeding was held at the prosecutor's office in the misappropriation case. Korbuly and Irén filed an appeal against the decision to halt the investigation in the misappropriation and other crimes case.
- Richard and his attorney met several times in the prosecutor's office in August. Sometime after the forgery charges were leveled, the prosecutor again halted the investigation in the misappropriation case.
- In September, there were repeated proceedings at the prosecutor's office and the Court of Discipline. In addition, the charge of misappropriation handling was moved to a civil suit.
- On September 27, 1943, a hearing in the Court of Discipline occurred, and Richard was acquitted in the defamation case. Korbuly was charged for lawyer's fees.
- From October through January 1944, there were repeated proceedings before the investigating judge. The charge of forgery was withdrawn due to lack of evidence. And on January 19, the judge denied a request for an investigation into the misappropriation case.
- On February 15, 1944, proceedings rejected the appeal that was filed against the decision to halt the investigation in the misappropriation case.

To summarize, Richard had escaped every criminal and civil lawsuit and charge filed against him.

However, Korbuly's frustration and assertiveness reached new heights. His objective extended beyond Richard's resignation to a complete removal from the business. When Bernhard passed away in 1936, Dóra did not receive any additional inheritance, as it went to her mother, Margit. Bernhard had previously bestowed upon Dóra a large piece of property in the southwest suburbs of Budapest called Kamaraerdő, intended as her inheritance, and in 1941, Dóra's mother appointed Korbuly to manage the estate giving him Power of Attorney. While it is assumed that Dóra inherited what remained of Bernhard's share in the business when her mother passed away in mid-1944, this supposition is contingent on the absence of Margit's will. Money did seem to be a driving force in Dóra's life as in 1942 she was arrested and jailed for fraud in a jewelry scheme with another woman[108].

At some point during the battle, Lajos Korbuly and Dóra Groedel Korbuly divorced, but Lajos continued on with the lawsuit as the divorce seemingly had no impact on his power of attorney.

During 1936 – 1944, Richard moved between Máramarossziget, Skole, Vienna, Budapest, Kommando, Covasna, and back to Budapest. He had citizenship from, at one time or another, Hungary, Romania, and Poland.

In late May or early June 1944, amid the German occupation of Budapest and with Richard present in the city, a report was filed with the Gestapo alleging that Richard had assisted Polish refugees in escaping to Tito's Yugoslavia while residing at the Skole estate in Poland. The report also accused him of engaging in racial defamation by marrying an Aryan, Valerie Grotzinger. During this period, German law prohibited unions between Jews and Gentiles. However, it is noteworthy that Richard and Valerie were already divorced, though the exact timing and reasons for their divorce remain unclear, but probably due to the recent Nazi laws. Owing to the wartime bombardments, Valerie had asked Richard to stay with her, resulting in them cohabiting against the regulations.

On June 12, 1944, the Gestapo arrested both Richard and separately Valerie, transporting them to Pestvidék prison. Valerie was confined for approximately one month, while Richard endured imprisonment and torture for about four months. Richard's experiences are detailed earlier in this family story.

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[108] *See the chapter "Dora"*

Following his release from prison, and driven by the anger of his near deportation to Auschwitz, Richard predictably directed his wrath towards Korbuly.

On April 23, 1945, only a week or two after Soviet forces drove the last of the Germans and their Arrow Cross collaborators from Hungary, the mud-slinging began in earnest when Richard filed a complaint with the Hungarian political police, making numerous allegations against Korbuly for war crimes:

- Korbuly collaborated with the Gestapo
- He falsely accused Richard of assisting Polish refugees
- He divulged Richard's marriage to an Aryan to the Gestapo
- Richard claimed that Korbuly had a picture of Hitler at his bedside
- He claimed that Korbuly supported the Arrow Cross
- Richard claimed that Korbuly, while fighting in Russia, had innocent Russian Jews rounded up and accused them of being partisans, after which they were murdered
- Korbuly had been seen in the company of German officers
- Korbuly traded in stolen carpets from Ukraine
- Slandered the court claiming that Korbuly said the "Hungarian court can be bribed."

Richard emphatically demanded that Korbuly be arrested and imprisoned.

On May 7, 1945, Korbuly was interviewed by the Hungarian police and signed a confession admitting he filed the complaint with the Gestapo. Both Richard and Valerie stated under oath that while they were imprisoned the Gestapo acknowledged that Korbuly was the informant. However, in a written statement and at trial, Korbuly recanted, asserting that his confession was made under duress, and denied involvement in reporting Richard to the Gestapo:

"... I never reported Richard Groedel to any political authority, and if he was detained or interned, it was only because, at that time, all millionaire Jews were interned or deported ... I was not involved in such deceitfulness; such deceit was appropriated by Richard Groedel for himself."

"The reason for depriving Richard Groedel of his position in the business was not his Jewishness, but his gestures, which were in every respect without any correctness. I have in my possession letters from Albert Groedel and Otto Groedel to me, which describe Richard Groedel as anything but a decent man. Dr. Gyula Kertész Jr. can attest to the circumstances which caused Richard Groedel to lose the confidence of the family. The deprivation of the right to register a company was the wish of the Jewish members of the Groedel family, and all of them know that Richard Groedel is prepared to denounce everyone, anonymously or by name, in order to achieve his own ends, out of a desire for revenge. I also mention here that I know from Albert Groedel that Richard Groedel also accused his brother of racial defamation. But I also know from Paula Lónyai, who told me that Richard Groedel told her that he would report me to the Gestapo to have me killed because I had taken him away by the Gestapo. Dr Bernolák Nándor cannot be accepted as an uninterested witness, not only because of his political behavior, but also because he was the legal representative of Richard Groedel, and even more because Richard Groedel wanted to bring him into the company as a legal adviser, which we objected to."

It is also an accusation against me that I would have claimed that the Hungarian court can be bribed, is an accusation I do not even want to deal with, it is so frivolous.

It is also an accusation against me that I brought home a carpet from the battlefield, I did bring home a carpet, but I bought that carpet with my own salary and with a commandant's permit, and this can be proved by Dr. László Felix, a doctor of the county, and László Erdős IV. 3, Servita Square, ...

I am accused of having kept a photograph of Hitler, which was nothing more than a postcard sent by post, and it was my wife, who was of Jewish origin, who told me to put it away.

I am also accused of associating with right-wing people. Since my wife [Dóra] is of Jewish origin and I had been acquainted with some of them at an earlier date, I did not consider it advisable, in view of her origin, to terminate the acquaintance without any transition.

It is a false and unfounded claim that I have several Russian-theater war medals other than the Fire Cross. ...and it is also untrue that I was in partisan action and was wounded twice. I did my military service in the Ukraine and my assignment was to transport the wounded from the hospital to the railway station.

Disputing Korbuly's assertion of innocence, Dr. Gyula Térfy, who previously served as Korbuly's attorney in the civil lawsuits against Richard, underwent deposition on May 3, 1945. During his pre-trial interview, he presented the following conflicting and damaging information:

"I started doing business with Lajos Korbuly about four years ago. I was about to start a lawsuit against the Groedel group in order to clarify its domestic and foreign assets. As I considered the case hopeless, I initially discouraged him from suing, but after a year and a half of stalling, I decided to sue Richard Groedel. Korbuly was not satisfied with the way the case was going, which, as I had foreseen, was unfavorable to him, so he came to me in May 1944 and announced that he was going to report Groedel to the Gestapo for supporting Poles with money or property and for committing racial hatred with his Austrian-born wife. I described the fact of his allegations as pointless and made it clear to him that he would not achieve his aim, because Groedel would be deported, but he [Korbuly] would still not get any money. He did not listen to me, but insisted that he would show it to the Jew. With that he left, and after that I only met him once or twice more, but then we only talked about indifferent things."

The Indictment:

"Charged, he admitted to committing the crime he was charged with. Based on the testimony of the witnesses heard during the investigation, it was necessary to establish the fact that before filing his report, the defendant had already reported the victim Richard Groedel to the Hungarian authorities, and then through his lawyer, he wanted to blackmail him, and when this blackmail attempt failed, he reported the victim to the German Gestapo.

On the basis of the above, I had to establish a set of facts in the indicative part of my indictment, which constitute the elements of the offences charged. The indictment is therefore justified.

I recommend the maintenance of the accused's pretrial detention because the grounds for the order still exist.

Budapest, June 12, 1945"

As a result, Korbuly was arrested on May 8, imprisoned, underwent a trial, and received a six-month prison sentence for charges of defamation and war crimes. Unfortunately, the media opted not to cover the trial, leaving a void

in public knowledge despite the explosive and dramatic revelations from witnesses regarding Richard's character and accusations against Korbuly, along with Korbuly's counterclaims. Nonetheless, 140 pages of case records obtained from the Hungarian archives in Budapest supplies the missing details[109].

The motivation behind Korbuly's alleged informing the Gestapo about Richard can be traced to Richard's managerial inadequacies, his quest for complete control, and a lack of transparency. Over the years, Korbuly, along with other Groedel family members, engaged in legal disputes against Richard, seeking to compel him to disclose financial records and investigate various alleged fraudulent activities. Faced with financial turmoil, Richard resorted to threatening bankruptcy instead of settling debts owed to creditors, including Korbuly. Refusing to provide a comprehensive account of the business, Richard's actions fueled frustration and discontent. Additionally, Korbuly either aspired to co-manage the business with Richard or, preferably, assume independent control once Richard was removed. In late 1943, Richard sent an undisclosed letter to Korbuly who responded in November.

Lajos Korbuly
XI. Siroki street 3/a.

November 9th, 1943.
To the Honorable Baron Mr. Richard Groedel
Budapest V. Bathory street 8.

In reference to your undated letter, I bring the following to your kind attention as both a creditor of the Groedel Brothers company of M.sziget, and in the name of the other creditors with whom I am connected regarding this case.

The above-mentioned creditors have treated your business activities and your person with the greatest distrust. As the business result shows, this distrust is in every way proper and justified, especially given that for years now, you have refused to give a full and creditable accounting to your creditors. The members of the company who are not entrusted with business management, among them Mrs. István Lónyay [Paula] and Mrs. János Sváb [Irén], are of this same opinion. For this reason, a year ago, the afore-named filed a request with the Márm.sziget company court asking for your dismissal as a company member entrusted with company management.

[109]*HU_BFL_XXV_1_a_1_1945_1299*

On August 23, 1943, you called a meeting of the company members and some of the creditors in order to postpone the exercise of their rights, and you promised that the books would be sent to Budapest and allow the interested parties to inspect them. On this we then mutually agreed. However, you saw fit afterward to give various excuses and break this agreement, and at the time, Dr. Bernolák filed a complaint about items missing from the joint minutes, about which my lawyer will be in touch. In the meantime, the minutes in their current form are not acceptable to me.

In your circular addressed to me, you lay down your standpoint that if we exercise our rights against the company and, in connection with it, we take action against you because we feel your activities endanger our property, then in reply, you will irrevocably declare bankruptcy, thereby taking the company and its interests into catastrophe.

You ask in your letter whom I can produce as a witness to your statement that you will destroy the property if you are not allowed control; I have my personal witnesses in this regard, but I also have your written proof in the letter addressed to the family.

In your letter, you declare you are willing to accept every friendly proposal to support a peaceful resolution. Considering that if we do not trust you, we repeat what we already asked last year, that our primary desire is that you resign from the management of the company, but we are willing to grant you extensive rights in the sense that you, despite having only a 9% share in the company, along with me can take over the running of the company and possibly liquidate it.

This offer is the most loyal one possible because you, as a 9% shareholder, are guaranteed as much as the other 91%.

If you do not accept my offer, you will once again prove that if I do not let you do as you please, you will ruin the deal or the company.

You claim that if there is no amicable liquidation, then liquidators will be legally appointed and they will take the assets.

Your filing for bankruptcy will not frighten anyone because we are convinced that the company G.G.[Gebruder Groedel] Maramarossziget and your private assets, whether donated or transferred to another party, will, in any case, be fully sufficient to satisfy all our claims.

Your letter lists as a creditor a person called Mrs. Richard Gőber. We believe it may be

your wife, whom I understand is called Mrs. Richard Groedel. Isn't there some mistake here? Because it must be assumed that the name Groedel can be spelled Groedel without a spelling mistake.

Because of the revision of the books, the firm's members will be involved.

With full tithe;
Lajos Korbuly sk.
Copies to;
Dr. br.Groedel Albert company member
Mrs Istvan Lonyay "
Svab Janosné "
if.br.Groedel Albert ---
Dr. Gyula Kertész, ---

Newspaper Reports
Kis Ujság, September 20, 1945

Lajos Korbuly was arrested on the complaint of Baron Groedel

The political police launched an investigation into an extremely complicated criminal case. Landowner Baron Richard Groedel appeared at the political police and filed a complaint against his brother-in-law, entrepreneur Lajos Korbuly, for violating personal freedom and war crimes. The baron stated that his brother-in-law had reported him to the Gestapo for racial blasphemy in the summer of last year and had revealed to the SS that he was delivering Polish refugees to Tito from his forest estate in Poland. As a result of the complaint, the Gestapo immediately arrested the wife of Baron Groedel, a woman of Austrian origin. The elderly landowner was released from the Gestapo prison with the help of influential friends after five months of imprisonment, just before deportation to Auschwitz. The detectives of the political police interrogated several people. During the interviews, it was revealed that Korbuly wanted to get rid of his brother-in-law and tried to get his hands on the huge fortune in this way. Lajos Korbuly denied that he had reported his brother-in-law. Based on the incriminating statements, the political police arrested him.

Szabadság, September 22, 1945

Lajos Korbuly, a timber merchant, denounced his relative Baron Richard Groedel and his wife to the Gestapo for racial defamation. The Arrow Cross officers detained the wife for a month and the husband for four months, and Korbuly was sentenced to six months in prison by the People's Court.

The Verdict

Budapest People's Court[110]

Nb. IV.1299/1945/8

In the name of the Hungarian people!

In the criminal case brought against Lajos Korbuly for a war crime, based on the public hearing held today, the court made the following

Verdict:

Accused Lajos Korbuly, who has been in pretrial detention since May 8, 1945, 45 years old, born in Nagyvárad, 44 Váci Street, Budapest resident, occupation horse dealer, has commercial high school diploma, no property, married to Teodora Groedel, father's name is Lajos Korbuly, mother's name: Orley Irma,

guilty

in the war crime specified in the No. 13.§.5. point.

The People's Court therefore sentences the accused Lajos Korbuly to (No. paragraph...) six months in prison as the main punishment, as well as, on the basis of (Paragraph...), to the deprivation of office and the suspension of the exercise of his political rights for the same period as a secondary punishment.

He took 4 months and 20 days of pre-trial detention as completed. Imprisonment shall be counted from the day the sentence of imprisonment begins, ancillary penalties shall be counted from the end of the imprisonment and sentence, and in the case of a statute of limitations, from the end of the statute of limitations.

However, the court declares the incurred criminal costs and the subsequent criminal costs as irrecoverable for the time being.

The court orders the judgment to be sent to the Budapest People's Prosecutor's Office, etc .... (not interesting).

---

[110]*HU BFL – XXV.1.a – 1299 – 1945 pp 37-38*

He is acquitted of the crime against the people (Paragraph...).

justification

Based on the statement of the accused Lajos Korbuly, the testimony of Richard Groedel, Mrs. Groedel, Dr. Nándor Bernolák, and Dr. Gyula Térffy, the people's court accepted the following facts as proven:

There is a family relationship between the accused Lajos Korbuly and the victim Richárd Groedel. Based on this relationship, they shared interests in several family-related profit-making enterprises. These businesses, which were family assets, were managed by Richárd Groedel and the defendant made various financial demands against the victim, which he did not fulfill. The defendant tried to enforce them through a civil lawsuit. As he was unable to achieve his claim in this way, he also filed a criminal complaint against the victim, namely for racial slander, and when he did not reach his goal, he reported the victim to the Gestápo for racial slander and the theft of German property. The Gestápo held the victim in captivity for 4 months, but then released him.

The accused denied his guilt, and his denial is contradicted by the testimony of Richard Groedel, according to which he was told by the Gestapo that the accused was the whistleblower.

The witness Dr Nándor Bernolák also testified that the accused before him threatened the victim with the Germans.

Witness Dr Gyula Térffy, who is the defendant's legal representative in the civil lawsuits, also testified that the defendant wanted to report the victim, while he tried to divert the accused from his intention.

The defendant himself did not deny that he made such statements in front of the lawyers, but he only wanted to scare the victim with them. Their witness also had the impression at the time that this was how the accused wanted to put pressure on the victim in order to achieve his property claims.

With all these confessions, the court considered it proven that the accused had reported Richard Groedel to the Gestapo, thereby acting as an informer for a German unit.

When imposing the sentence, the court took into account the defendant's criminal record and the fact that his actions were not motivated by religious hatred, but by a long-standing family property dispute as a mitigating circumstance.

The court did not detect any aggravating circumstances, so application of BTK.92.§. is found to be fair.

On the other hand, the court convicted the accused under Nbrn.12. §.4. he was acquitted of the charges, in the absence of evidence, because he did not see it as justified that the accused had really shown the pictures in question, nor that he had the pictures in his possession, or whether he really showed them for the purpose of propaganda.

Budapest, on the 19th of September 1945.

In my estimation, it doesn't appear that Korbuly was primarily interested in obtaining "the huge fortune" as the newspapers would have us believe, although I'm sure he and the others wanted access to their investments and to better understand how the business was being run. His priority was more likely to see Richard removed from managing the business as Richard's management style was not respected by the majority of the family.

Ultimately, although at different times, both Richard and Korbuly, possibly fittingly for each of their offences, suffered incarceration.

Figure 137.
Baron Viktor Groedel

VIKTOR (1900-1981)

Viktor is the eldest son of Dr. Baron Albert Groedel and Gisela Pollack (1900-1981). Information about Viktor's life is minimal.

According to OSS documents, Viktor worked in Beirut, Syria, during WWII for the British.

See the section on Grinik A.G. for info on Nazi aryanization.

Attended University of Zurich. Previously, University of Vienna.

University of Zurich
Groedel Baron Viktor, Student number 27280
Faculty iur. (juris prudence)
Winter semester, year of enrollment 1919
Date of birth: January 28, 1900
Place of origin: Budapest
Country of origin Hungary
Information about previous education Univ. Vienna (Exmatr.), Mat.zgn. Elisabethgymn. Vienna
Leaving the university. March 6, 1920
Information about the parents E: Baron Albert G', Geneva, Hôtel Beau-Rivage

Wiener Salonblatt, 14, November, 1926

Baron Viktor V. Königswarter, who, as is well known, practiced in the wood industry for a long time with his father-in-law [Hermann] on his estates in Romania. Together with Baron Aladär Döry and Baron Viktor Groedel v. Gyulafalva and Bogdän, they opened a wood shop in Comando near Kronstadt, Romania, which the three men mentioned personally run.

Wiener Salonblatt March 10, 1935, page 8

Baron Victor v. Groedel, the older son of Baron Albert and Baroness Gisela Groedel, married Adele Petrescu in Sinaia.

A Personal Memory of Viktor

During my research, I was in contact with Ed Visser in The Netherlands, whose wife, Sasha Meyer, is distantly related to the Groedel family. She provided me with the following story about Viktor and a few others.

Memories of Die Familie Groedel

Written by Suse Ullmann Walk-Lonna (date unknown)
Suse was the godchild of Gisela Groedel-Pollack von Parnegg
Translated from German by Google Translate
Transcribed with minor corrections by Jerry Zeisler (jerry.zeisler@gmail.com)
October 2024

One of my mother's cousins was Gisela Groedel, a daughter of the rich textile manufacturer [Leopold] Pollak-Parnegg. He had 8 children. She married a Baron [Albert] Groedel, a wealthy timber wholesaler and landowner, who owned extensive estates in Romania and Bukovina[111]. The area was famous for its abundance of wood and the family lived on "the grandest footing."

They had a mansion in Vienna, as well as an estate in Bukovina, where bear hunts were organized. to which they invited all sorts of other rich people, and as much as I remember, also the prince of Monaco.

They, the family Groedel, liked to be seen in noble society, but the right, true old Austrian family nobility did not take much notice of them. Groedels were "money barons."

Gisela and her husband had two sons. Vicky (Viktor) and Hans, they were very elegant and spoiled. Although we were cousins and second cousins, they never even looked at me, I was a poor nobody.

Now the Groedel couple, and especially he [Albert], had a passion - the casino of Monte Carlo. Or rather the roulette game. They finally succeeded in the course of a few years, to squander almost all their money there. But they were supposed to be so rich that money was no object at all.

Vicky, the elder son, led the life of a rich, elegant young gentleman. One saw him only in aristocratic and very best company at balls and at the polo pitch on horseback. Hans was the more serious, hardworking one, who was really concerned about the business and was soon married to an Austrian aristocrat (Auersperg[112]).

---

[111] *Máramarossziget and Skole*

[112] *I believe Suse is mistaken. Hans married Maria-Christine von Callenberg. I have found no connection with Auersperg family.*

I met Aunt Gisela here and there in the city, I remember at Demel [*a coffee house in Vienna* -JZ]. She was my godmother, something she had long forgotten, and if she had not forgotten, she would have denied it. She was small, always dressed extravagantly. Terribly short-sighted, she always held a precious lorgnette in front of her eyes and she was always in a hurry to get away from me and my friends.

I did not see her again until 1948 when I was invited by Aunt Gretl and drove to Monte Carlo. Aunt Gretl has spent her time in exile in beautiful Monte Carlo. She had become a French citizen by marrying Jean Billiter. When the war began, she was in Monte Carlo. Marianne. her sister, was on a Mediterranean cruise. When she heard that the war had broken out, she did not return to Frydek, but went directly to her sister's house in Monte Carlo.

Gisela was an old woman of about 75 when I saw her again. She walked on crutches and lived poorly in a second-class hotel.

She had fallen somewhere during the war. The fracture was treated very badly and she could never again walk properly. What was left of their goods and their wealth after they had lost almost everything at roulette was taken away by war, Herr Hitler, and finally the Romanian state. She had nothing left and finally she lived on the alms that her rich sister, Clementine, was reluctant to give her. Old Baron Grödel had long since died[113] and did not live to see the collapse.

Hans had fled from Hitler, went to Canada and left his wife in Vienna in the hope that they could at least save the Viennese property. He got involved in timber deals in Canada, invested his last money, lost it, and shot himself in the head.

And Vicky, the handsome salon lion, went to Romania during the Hitler era, where he probably tried to save what could be saved.

I do not know where he spent the years 1938 to 1945[114]. After the war, he did come in contact again with old acquaintances and relatives from home and abroad. I only heard that Vicky was in prison in Bucharest and had to sew slippers for months. I cannot tell you how long he was imprisoned, but there is Herma Groedel (widow after Vicky's cousin Otto), which I want to ask (died 1979).

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[113] *Albert died in 1944 in Auschwitz, but Suse may not have known or wanted to admit the fact in this letter.*

[114] *The American OSS notes that during the war, Viktor was working for the British in Syria.*

After much effort, he was said to have managed to get out and he married a very nice young lady, a woman from Bucharest, from a "good family." Although there was already communism there, there were certainly still good families. In any case, his wife got all sorts of jewelry from her mother in the marriage. As far as I know, Vicky was imprisoned again and his wife tried to get him out. The only way to leave the country was to get a visa to Israel and after a lot of effort, the time had come. Vicky was finally free again and the couple went or drove to the airport with hope in their hearts of finally being free.

At the airport, they were arrested again or brought back under some pretext. And since Vicky's wife had taken her jewelry in spite of the communist decrees, which had threatened the death penalty for carrying jewelry abroad, the poor woman had no choice but to drop one piece of jewelry after another on the street as inconspicuously as possible in order to save her life.

I do not know how long the two were then held back, but one day the moment or the hour came when they achieved freedom. I lived in Vienna and heard through acquaintances that Vicky Groedel was in Vienna. I even saw him from a distance once. He still looked good, tall, slim, a nice older gentleman.

And as in a fairy tale, everything went well because Vicky's cousin, Raul, the son of Aunt Clementine who had so miserably supported her sister, this Raul, who became the heir to large factories in Alsace, lovingly took in his cousin and gave him an excellent job, so that Vicky could immediately make a nice home in Mulhouse / France. The factories are located in Hirsingue / France, which is about 24 km away!

Now the fairy tale would be over, but I have to you, Andi that I came in contact with Vicky, actually his name was Viktor.

His mother Gisela lived to be almost 90 years old, but it was really awful. She did not want to live anymore, she was not able to leave her hotel room for the last few years, nobody wanted to take care of her, only Herma (Viktor's and Hans's cousin by marriage), "the good one," was the only one who looked after her more often.

She still saw her son.

When Aunt Gretl Billiter died in 1963, 83 years old, her cousin Gisela Groedel was still living in Monte Carlo. But in order to protect her, they could no longer

tell her about the death of her relatives. But Gisela bequeathed Aunt Gretl two lovely little brooches, two small vine branches, one decorated with sapphires, the other with rubies. (I know them, my grandma Mari last had them, they are probably with Aunt Christa).

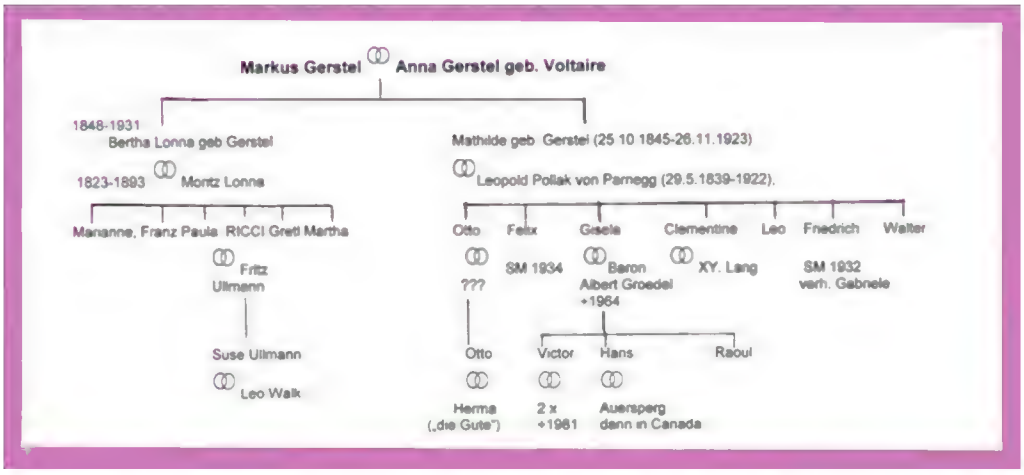
When Gisela died, Gretl had already been dead for half a year, and Herma, the widow of Vicky's cousin Otto, asked him if she could give me these brooches. You know them, Andilein. I thanked him warmly in a letter and received a very kind reply and approval from Vicky. I think that the arrogant polo player has become a kind, good, person.

Addendum: Salzburg April 26, 1982

In 1980, I spoke with him by phone. He lived in Vienna, was old and sick and asthmatic. He invited me, but I drove to Salzburg. In May 1981, at a birthday gathering of cousins and Maria, I learned through Maya that Vicky had died. So, in late 1980 or early 1981.

Figure 138.

Leopold Pollak von Parnegg Family Tree



From Sasha Meyer in The Netherlands (regarding the above memoir by Suse) 2019

Suse was Gisela Groedel-Pollack von Parnegg's godchild. You'll see how Suse tells of Gisela's rise and fall, the losses at the roulette table, and her poverty after the war. What strikes me is the sentence: ''Der alte baron Grödel war ja längst tot, er hat den Zusammenbruch nicht mehr erlebt.'' If he'd died in Theresienstadt I would expect that to be in her account - wouldn't you?

But now I'm thinking: maybe Suse didn't know. Or maybe she didn't want to write about it as she was telling the story of the family to little Andi, who was then still young. Who knows.... Suse has a way with words, but throughout the book she tends to get some important facts wrong. Importantly too there was no internet for her to check and recheck like we seem to do....

I hope we'll find out some time or other what exactly happened. When and how Albert got to Theresienstadt. I know for a fact that Gisela was in Monaco in March 1939. And we have Suse telling that Gisela survived the war....

Best regards,

Sasha

Suse (1901-1989) started her memoirs around 1955. It was all bit and pieces I understand, written over the years, but my cousin Andi used them in a book about the Löwy family.

Suse was born as Suse Ullmann. But she became an orphan and after her adoption her name was Suse Lonna. Then after marriage Suse Walk-Lonna.

Figure 139.
Hans Groedel,
Skole, September 28, 1928

Figure 140.
Baron Hans Groedel and Marie-Christine von Callenberg, 1928, Vienna

HANS (1902-1945)

"Don't cry and don't despair! We must stay alive, we must live to see those murderers hang! I'll go to France, I'll enter the army there. We MUST finish those bandits!" (Hans Groedel regarding the Nazis, March 1938)

Baron Dr. Albert Groedel and his wife, Gisela Pollack von Parnegg, were parents to two sons, Viktor (1900-1981) and Hans (Janos/Jan) (1902–1945). The brothers were engaged in the lumber business at various points in their lives, along with other occupations.

Hans married Marie-Christine von Callenberg on February 19, 1924 in a Minorite church in Vienna. Marie-Christine (Christa) was born in Bucharest in 1905. The couple did not have any children during their marriage.

Christa was not only known as a society lady in high circles but also an accomplished horseback rider, winning many prizes in various competitions. There are several mentions of her activities in newspapers of the era. In the 1930s, she was known for her support of women's rights as well, having served on the board of the Vienna Call Club, a well-known woman's rights organization.

Around 1938, Hans and Christa divorced, which may have been forced due to the Nazi philosophy of eliminating Jewish blood from Aryans. Those already married when the laws went into effect were "encouraged" by the threat of aryanization, into divorce. Christa was Aryan.

Hans and Christa lived in Vienna at Argentinierstasse 13. In the 19th century, Vienna's Wieden district saw the construction of numerous bourgeois residential buildings. The one at Argentinierstrasse 13 was designed in 1880 by the architect Leopold Theyer in German renaissance style. The ***Mauthausen Memorial*** is currently located in the building and their website includes the building's history with some information about its former Jewish occupants[115], Hans included. This is somewhat ironic as Hans' father, Albert, died in Auschwitz, a "sister" camp of Mauthausen.

[115] *https://www.mauthausen-memorial.org/en/History/History-of-Argentinierstrasse-13*

Hans Groedel and the aryanization of Hermann Pollack & Son (HPS)

Before the Nazis rise to power, the company Hermann Pollack & Son (Hermann Pollack Söhne - HPS) was one of the most important textile firms in central Europe, with affiliates in Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Austria, and Germany. HPS was founded by Hans' Jewish great-grandfather, Hermann Pollack, in 1845 in Vienna. The huge family-owned textile concern was eventually run by Pollack's grandson, Otto, until his death in April 1937, after which it was inherited by Otto's nephew, 36-year-old Baron Hans Groedel. HPS also owned two financial institutions in Switzerland. As a result of the world economic crisis in 1929 and the collapse of German and Hungarian banks in 1931, HPS encountered financial difficulties. In 1931, HPS reached a loan standstill agreement with its creditor banks, including banks in Prague, Vienna, and London, the United Kingdom, as well as three banks in Switzerland.

Figure 141.
Christa Marie Groedel, Wiener Salonblatt, March 6, 1927

The creditor banks subsequently reorganized HPS from a sole proprietorship into a corporation, except for the HPS branches located in Germany and Austria, which suffered under anti-Semitic boycotts. In addition to HPS's German and Austrian branches, Hans owned all of the shares of the incorporated portion of HPS, but all of these shares were pledged to the creditor banks.

Figure 142.
Hans Groedel, Wiener Salonblatt, September 13, 1930

In 1937, in order to save the German branch of HPS by disguising its Jewish ownership, the Swiss creditor banks created a shell corporation in Switzerland to take ownership of the German branch. However, by decree on 26 April 1938, the Nazi Regime required all Jews who resided within the Reich, or who were nationals of the Reich, including Austria, of which Hans was one, and who held assets above a specified level to register all their assets as of 27 April 1938 (the 1938 Census)[116].

[116] *https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/1938-nazi-law-forced-jews-register-their-wealthmaking-it-easier-steal-180968894/*

Just weeks after the Anschluss, the annexation of Austria by Nazi Germany, a new law was swiftly enacted. On April 26, 1938, Hitler's government implemented the "Decree for the Reporting of Jewish-Owned Property," obliging all Jews in Germany and Austria to register any possessions or finances exceeding 5,000 Reichsmarks (equivalent to roughly $2,000 in American currency at the time, or $49,000 in 2025 dollars). This decree spared no category of asset, encompassing everything from household items and artworks to financial holdings like life insurance and stocks. By July 31 of that same year, German financial authorities had amassed documentation from approximately 700,000 Jewish individuals—representing an estimated wealth of 7 billion Reichsmarks ($56B in 2025), all earmarked for state-sanctioned expropriation, commonly referred to as "aryanization." Historian Götz Aly characterized aryanization as a vast, continent-spanning enterprise in stolen goods.

Concurrently, Hans was in Switzerland and ran into an old friend, Anna Helen (née Mahler) Aszkanazy. In her memoir, '"My Recollections": An Excerpt,' Anna wrote the following that occurred in March 1938:

"One day I ran into Baron Hans Groedel, an old friend. We both cried out. "In black?" he asked, aghast. I had bought a black cape which covered all my dresses. I told him what had happened and he shook my arms. "Don't cry and don't despair! We must stay alive, we must live to see those murderers hang! I'll go to France, I'll enter the army there. We MUST finish those bandits!"

"I had to think of the poor democratic politician, Marie Elisabeth Lüders[117], who with those same words said she had to see the Nazis hang—she was herself now in a concentration camp. I had also to think of France and of that anti-Semite Claude Emile-Lorrant. I did not say anything to Baron Groedel. Everything seemed to me useless."[118]

After the March 1938 Anschluss, Nazi authorities appointed an official administrator to oversee HPS's Austrian branch because its owner, Hans, was Jewish. "Hermann Pollack's Söhne" was therefore considered a Jewish business and was approved for aryanization. During the global economic crisis, the company

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[117]*Marie-Elisabeth Lüders (June 25, 1878 – March 23, 1966) was a German politician and women's rights activist.*

[118]*https://www.vhec.org/wp-content/uploads/2021_issue2_fall.pdf (Vancouver Holocaust Education Center)*

became dependent on various banks, which is why the aryanization efforts initially aimed to make the Austrian banks the sole shareholders of the company and thus "aryanize" the company from a financial perspective.[119]

On August 16, 1938, the Hungarian newspaper, Ország-Világ, published the following article:

The Budapest textile company Hermann Pollack Sons was actually just a branch of the Viennese company. The main shareholder of the textile industry and trading company operating in several countries is Baron János Groedel, who opened the Austrian, Czech and Hungarian companies Hermann Pollack Sons from Vienna. After the Anschluss, Baron Groedel moved his headquarters to Prague and sold the Viennese company. On the other hand, he is trying to keep his Czech and Hungarian companies, it was so that Hermann Pollack Sons Rt. company will be independent, without being headquartered in Prague.

Following this, HPS's leadership aimed to relocate the company's financial operations to neutral Switzerland, particularly to one of its own banks. Concurrently, creditor banks restructured HPS's Austrian branch into a corporation, displacing its Jewish executives and staff. The widespread termination of Jewish personnel was replicated across HPS's branches in Czechoslovakia subsequent to the Nazi incursion into Bohemia and Moravia, and the subsequent annexation of these regions as the Reichsprotektorat of Bohemia and Moravia on March 15, 1939.

In February 1940, Hans was abruptly removed from his position as a board member within the company, forfeiting all related privileges. Although still entitled to a significant severance package, he likely remained unaware of it due to extenuating circumstances - Hans had been arrested by the Germans in Prague shortly following the annexation of Bohemia and Moravia and the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1939. The location and duration of his imprisonment remain unknown. Nevertheless, in the years that followed, Hans exhibited a distinct fear of the Nazis with long-standing despondency.

Predictably, throughout the years, the Groedels had cultivated an extensive network of acquaintances, including many with international ties. On August 23, 1945, a letter labeled "SECRET" was drafted by Jan F. Libich of the Ameri-

[119] *https://services.phaidra.univie.ac.at/api/object/o:1296999/get*

can OSS (Office of Strategic Services), an organization preceding the American Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and a self-professed intimate confidant of the Groedels. It is worth inserting the letter here in its original form and entirety.

Recognizing that his ownership of HPS had come to an abrupt end, Hans har-

Declassified per Executive Order 12958, Section 3.5
NND Project Number: NND 877183 By: NND Date: 1987

Figure 143. OSS letter regarding the Groedel family

MEMORANDUM 23 August 1945

TO: Mr. Gardiner S. Platt

FROM: Jan F. Libich

SUBJECT: Grinak, A.G., Basel

In a SAFEHAVEN report from State Department, dated 24 July 1945, our number 1567, a thorough investigation is made of subject holding corporation, liquidated in Basel in 1942, and founded for investments of Dr. Albert Freiherr von Groedel and Victor Freiherr von Groedel.

The undersigned is a close friend of members of the Groedel family and is sure that no SAFEHAVEN interests are involved. Albert Groedel died about ten years ago. His son, Victor Groedel, who later acquired Polish nationality, was last reported in Beirut, Syria, working for the British Government. His brother, Baron Hans Groedel, who also had Polish nationality, was a partner in the textile firm of Hermann Pollack Soehne, with factories in Bohemia, Austria, and Germany. He was arrested in Prague by the Germans after the occupation of Czechoslovakia. He later escaped with the help of the underground and immigrated to the United States in 1941. He later went to Canada and died there in 1945.

Victor and Hans Groedel were only able to bring a very small part of their once considerable fortune with them when they left Europe. Their loyalty to the Allied cause seems obvious.

Jan F. Libich

bored genuine concerns for his safety if he were to be apprehended again. Around the close of 1940, he managed to escape his imprisonment with assistance from the OSS, as previously mentioned. Separated from Christa due to their divorce, he journeyed through Turkey and Syria before ultimately boarding a ship in Bombay, India. Roughly a week later, on June 16, 1941, he arrived at New York Harbor after disembarking from the SS President Harrison.

In the previously-discussed letter Richard wrote to his cousin Franz Groedel in New York in 1946 about the demise of the Groedel lumber empire, Richard wrote the following that corroborates Hans's prearranged trip to America:

"We were not there long [Skole] until the Germans marched into Poland[120]*. I strongly advised my Uncle Albert de Groedel and his son, Hans, who had fled hither from Czechoslovakia, to leave at once for Rumania, which they did and I followed soon after. When the Germans entered Rumania*[121]*, my uncle, my wife and I fled once more to Hungary. My cousin Hans suggested that I go with him to America by way of Turkey. This I did not want to do because it meant leaving my wife behind."*

The manifest from Hans's arrival in the US on June 16, 1941, notes the following:

- He is a 38-year-old Business Manager
- Nationality: Yugoslavia
- Race or People: Polish
- Place of Birth: Vienna
- Visa or Passport Issued: April 7, 1941 (Bombay)
- Last permanent residence is listed as Bucharest, Roumania.
- Claims to be widowed, although that was untrue as Marie survived through 1979. They were divorced.

Hans benefited greatly from valuable and influential connections, in particular with the OSS, considering the perilous nature of traversing both Turkey and Syria in 1941 during the German army's advance, along with the typical challenges at the time in obtaining a US visa. It appears that Hans stayed just slightly ahead of the German advance, avoiding capture. Gebruder Groedel's substantial business ties with Turkey's political leaders and international intelligence organizations, suggest that these connections facilitated Hans's

[120] *1939*

[121] *Oct 1940*

passage through the country. Similarly, given Syria's historical ties to the Ottoman Empire, Gebruder Groedel likely had influential contacts there as well. The means by which Hans traveled the long distance from Syria to India remains unknown, but could also have been aided by the American intelligence agency either through the British-held Suez Canal, or via air. In either case, it would have been a long and arduous journey.

Hans's escape from Europe and the Nazis led him on a journey that spanned from Czechoslovakia to Skole, Poland, then to Kommando in Transylvania, and further to Turkey, Syria, and India, before finally boarding a ship bound for New York. On the ship's manifest, Hans specified his "Final Destination" as "Brazil via New York." His planned stop in New York was to meet with a banker at the firm Dominic & Dominic, situated at 115 Broadway. Dominic & Dominic, was an investment house specializing in acquiring American stocks for foreign accounts. It seems plausible that Hans intended to visit D&D to access personal assets held in the US, possibly to fund his journey and life in his intended destination country. Despite arriving in the US with a modest sum of two hundred dollars with the intention of staying for only a month, Hans successfully prolonged his stay for approximately two years before eventually applying to immigrate to Canada. Immigration documents from a Canadian agency note that Hans was living in Portland, Maine, when he applied for immigration to Canada. To live in the country and become a Canadian citizen, he proposed an investment $35,000 in a business.

[Canadian Agency]

Ottawa, September 4, 1942

Jan Groedel:

This proposed immigrant is a citizen of Poland, 50 years of age, single, presently residing in the United States, who is desirous of settling in Canada; he is reported to have capital amounting to approximately $35,000 available for investment in this country and it is proposed to make his admission conditional on the transfer of such sum to Canada.

(in a a separate document below provides further detail)

Jan Groedel, citizen of Poland, aged 50 years, presently residing in Portland, Maine, U.S.A., bringing forward capital for investment in Canada, probably in

lumber or agriculture.

After being accepted into Canada, Hans moved to Vancouver, British Columbia in Western Canada where he started up a logging business with a friend, John Feigl.

His financial investment in the Canadian lumber business may not have gone well. Rumors claim that he lost whatever investment he had in the business, and while in a despondent state, in February1945 in Vancouver, Hans took his own life.

Prince George Citizen

Prince George, B.C, Thursday, February 22, 1945

Despondent Lumberman ends Life

Baron Jan Groedel, Viennese Refugee, Died of Gunshot Wounds Monday

Jan Groedel, Viennese refugee, died of self-inflicted gunshot wounds between 9 and 11 a.m. Monday, while in a state of despondency. The verdict returned on Monday night by a coroner's jury opened by M. S. Skinner, coroner. Baron Groedel, president of Northern Spruce Co. Ltd., escaped from Poland in 1940-41 to Hungary then was nearly caught in the Nazi invasion and continued his flight through Turkey and Syria to India. He was 43.

He sailed from India to New York where he sought shelter with John Feigl, vice-president of the company formed upon coming west after 18 months in the United States.

Baron Groedel's flight half way around the globe was described to the jury by Mr. Feigl, who translated a letter addressed to the living partner and found by Cpl. Norman DeWitt on the dresser of the room in which the body was discovered.

"I had no other way out. Thanks much for everything. Good luck," it read in part, in requesting that a sister-in-law in England and a brother in Bucharest be advised of the decision I had a long time made (illegible)."

"ALWAYS DEPRESSED"

Mr. Feigl testified that his partner had been "always depressed," that he had told him "life has no more (illegible) for me; I'm going to make my (illegible) journey."

Baron Groedel left instruction for a "very simple funeral with my partner as the only person to attend."

Cpl. Norman O. DeWitt, in charge of the city detachment, B.C. Police, had a letter in English enclosed with the one in German, under date January 15 in which Baron Groedel instructed Gerald Pelton, Vancouver lawyer, regarding disposal of the business "after my death."

Const. A. G Perry testified seeing the body with the skull shattered and a 30.06 rifle held in one hand (illegible) muzzle forward along the body. W.H. Henderson testified rapping one time on Baron Groedel's door without securing any response and indicated he returned later and unlocked the door, the- key being on the outside of the spring lock. He that since an illness in December, Mr. Groedel had left the key outside the door.

MEDICAL EVIDENCE

Dr. E.J. Lyon testified as to the sudden and total destruction of the brain by a bullet which penetrated the hard palate in the roof of the mouth and of the rifle lying across body.

Charles Straw was foreman of the jury which comprised C. E. Arnett, (illegible) Geddes, Robert McMillan, (illegible) Bustin and Lewis Goodrich.

Baron Groedel addressed Rotarians last fall on German minorities in European countries and evinced the fear of fifth columnists in a speech in which he described how he huddled aboard a freight car to cross the Roumanian border as the (illegible) swept into the country. He (illegible) extreme bitterness of the per-(illegible) of unassimilable German colon-(illegible) who enabled Nazis to sweep Europe and urged Rotarians to help assimilate foreign-born into fullest Canadian citizenship.

Reparations

Sometime after 1949, Hans' wife, Marie, submitted claims restitution for the aryanization of HPS while under her former husband's control. She claimed to have been Hans's widow, which is not technically accurate since they had divorced prior to his suicide.

The following excerpt is from an American declassified restitution document from the Safehaven project pertaining to the aryanization of Jewish property:

c) According to our knowledge, the Aryanization of the firm Herm.Pollack's Sons was carried out in that way that the assets of the firm were sold by the Oberfinanzpraesident of Vienna, whereby the partners of the firm Pichler were active in various ways [Pichler is the firm that acquired the discounted assets of HPS].

The firm is claimed by way of restitution by the baroness Christa Groedl as widowed heiress after baron Hans Groedel. As far as we can see, it concerns in general the restitution of the factory building Vienna XXI, Voltagasse 40-42 and the machines which have been sold by the partners of the firm Pichler. Various restitution procedures are dealing with the important questions. The main restitution applications are dealing with the restitution of the factory building. The public administrator of this matter is Dr. Aladar Doery, Vienna I, Moelkerbastei 5, and the lawyer in this matter is Dr. Ludwig Franz Tapek, Vienna IV, Wohllebeng.8. In this case It concerns an object with about 12,000 m^2 area, from which 7000 m^2 are lots with buildings.

(source: (https://www.fold3.com/image/270459126)

Christa's claim for restitution was rejected on the grounds that the property was owned by the Austrian Postal Administration and therefore the requirements for the first restitution law were not met. The property was sold and a sale was a bilateral private law transaction and not an administrative order [a technicality since the property was still Aryanized].

With a decision dated July 31, 1947, after the appeal, the claim to the restitution of six typewriters, an adding machine and a box with 36 drawers was finally recognized. The applicant, Christa Groedel, was recognized by the Financial Procuratorate on November 15, 1949 as the legitimate person entitled to resti-

tution for the above-mentioned items. On December 27, 1949, Christa Groedel was served with the notice of appeal, which legitimized her as the owner of the office machines. However, her claim to restitution was rejected by the State Finance Directorate on February 3, 1951. The reason given was that she was only the legal successor of a brother of her divorced, deceased husband, and only the injured owner, his heirs or legatees, but not legal successors, were entitled to restitution on the basis of a legal transaction between the living. Christa Groedel appealed against this judgment again. However, the appeal was withdrawn in a letter from her lawyer Ludwig Franz Tlapek dated November 13, 1951.[122]

Marie-Christine passed away in Vienna in 1979 having never remarried.

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[122] *https://hiko.univie.ac.at/PDF/10-2.pdf (Publications of the Austrian Historical Commission. Property seizure during the Nazi era and restitution and compensation since 1945 in Austria Economics of Aryanization Part 2: Economic sectors, industries, case studies 2004*

MARY (1920-2010)

Mary Groedel's life was a testament to courage, adaptability, and endurance through turbulent times. The only child of Baron Otto Groedel and Isabella Tartsay, her early life was shaped by privilege, but the chaos of the 20th century would reveal her strength and character.

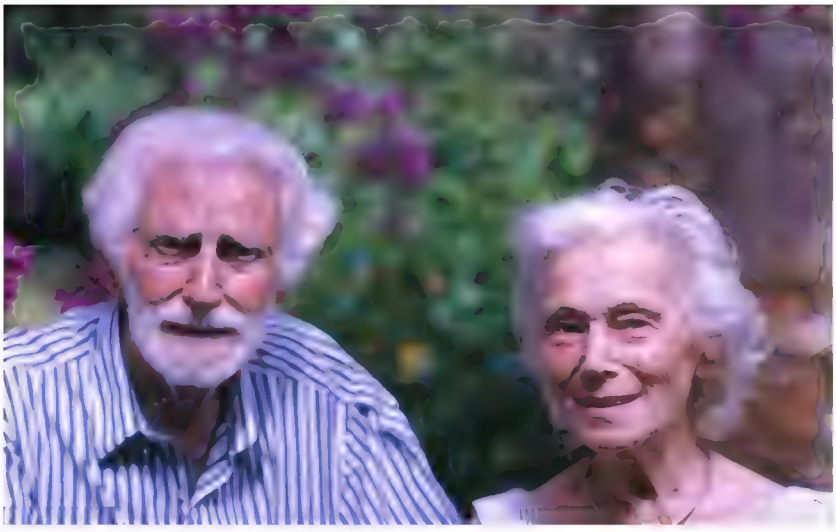

Figure 144.

Marcel Floris and Mary Groedel, 2002.

Courtesy of Gary Hardy, Ibiza History Culture

During World War II, Mary played a role in the Hungarian resistance against the Nazi regime and its collaborators. Operating in Budapest, she joined an underground group, taking on dangerous assignments that included smuggling refugees, creating false identification documents, and acquiring weapons. Despite the grave risks, Mary used her position at the Western Railway Station to shield those fleeing persecution. Her bravery extended to sheltering deserters, Jews, and leftists in her apartment, often under the nose of Arrow Cross patrols. Her resourcefulness and commitment saved numerous lives during one of history's darkest periods.

After the war, Mary faced the challenges of rebuilding her life. She married French poet Marcel Floris, and the couple shared a deep and loving bond throughout their marriage. Together, they lived a life of creativity and adventure, spending time in Caracas, Venezuela, and later Ibiza, Spain. In Caracas, Mary managed a store catering to well-off tourists, while Marcel focused on his artistic pursuits. Despite their outwardly idyllic life, Mary's relationship with her adopted daughter was reportedly strained.

In Ibiza, Mary and Marcel created a vibrant home that became a gathering place for artists and intellectuals. After Marcel's passing, Mary continued to live on the island, surrounded by caretakers and visitors, though she appeared to feel the weight of her loss. However, she maintained close relationships with her family and embraced the challenges of new environments and roles.

Mary's Legacy

The following is an excerpt from an article titled "Karcsi" published June 15, 1946 in the newspaper, Uj Magyarozság (New Hungarian). It describes a time during WW2 in Budapest when Mary Groedel was involved in the underground against the Nazi regime and its collaborators.

Karcsi

Reminiscences of a righteous martyr

Written by: Boldizsar Ivan

Fugitives, refugees, people looking for contact. We needed a refugee card. Karcsi had recruited ***Mary Gróedel****, one of the oldest members of our group*[123]*, to do the job. At the Western Railway Station, she volunteered at the Asylum Office. She "acquired" hand grenades and weapons from the Arrow Cross evacuation trains. Together with Karcsi, she was at the forefront of rescuing people. She smuggled people into her ruined apartment on Lendvay Street under the nose of the Arrow Cross police chief. There were nights when five or six deserters, persecuted Jews or illegal leftists slept at her place. I was present one night when she picked a wounded soldier from a westbound hospital transport off a train, took him to her apartment, fed him, got him civilian clothes and false papers, and put him in a safe place. If something went wrong, Karcsi was there and fixed it in minutes.*

This is an excerpt from a March 2, 1991 article in the magazine "Nepszava" written about Tamas Major who, before the war, was in the theater. He worked with Mary for a short time during the war. Major was a communist.

My memories of Tamás Major
By József Czimer

...

In the fall of 1944, Judit Beck, the wife of Major Tamás, lived under the alias of a comrade-friend in Óbuda, Dereglye utca 3,C. The flight officer who took the armistice delegation to the Russians after October 15 lived two floors above them. I needed an illegal place that was beyond suspicion, where I could publish an illegal paper. As a military inspector of the Western Railway Station Refugee Committee

[123]*Mary would have been 24 at the time.*

— appointed by myself and provided with the appropriate papers — I went to the Fő tér headquarters in an artillery officer's uniform and moved the Viennese-born, who had been bombed out of their villa on Lendvay Street, into an empty Jewish apartment on Dereglye Street 3/C. ***Baroness Mary Groedel****, a citizen of the German state, who does not speak Hungarian well, was received with great reverence. I immediately arranged for her to become the house manager. I acted as a relative who was entrusted by the family to take care of the young baroness until the villa was put in order. Of course, there was nothing wrong with the villa, but the baroness was an actual employee of the foreign affairs office at the western railway station. (László Zolnay remembers all of this in the book "Por és hamu".)*

Tamás Major also appeared in the house several times as a priest from Transylvania. Of course, I knew who they were, they didn't know me. At that time, the details of the residents had to be written on the door of every apartment, so that during the increasingly frequent raids, if the patrols found a stranger in the apartment, they could take him away. Mary Groedel, since she had to accompany the patrol from apartment to apartment during the raids and, if necessary, verify the residents, as the house commander, I made it a point to take special care of the Majors family, so they wouldn't get into trouble. With Jóská Török, the pilot introduced himself under this name, I became friends in the process, I didn't have to look after him, he had real papers. I also warned the baroness [Mary] not to reveal anything to Judith Beck, just to be careful of their incognito. After the liberation, even though I was not a party member, I had to apply for some civil work at the party headquarters on Köztársaság tér (then still Tisza Kálmán tér). We had to wait for Márton Horváth, along with Zoltán Zelk, György Nonn and a few other intellectuals who were sent here for the same reason. He finally stepped out of a door with Major Tamas Márton Horváth. When Major saw me, he stopped with his feet rooted to the ground. He looked at me coldly. "So this... How do you get here?" Márton Horváth explained it to him. Major barely recovered. Well! How we were afraid of you and that damn German bitch who can hardly speak Hungarian!"

[Tamás was a communist who didn't appreciate Mary (calling her a 'German bitch') even though she was quite helpful and an Austrian, not German.]

In discussions with Irina Leimbacher, a close cousin of Mary, she provided the following information in an email:

Irina Leimbacher, April 17, 2020:

Well, I can tell you -

"She married a French (published) poet named Marcel Floris and they had a long and very congenial marriage, always seemed in love, up until the end.

She went by the name of Mary FLORIS - not sure if she kept the maiden name somewhere in there or not.

At some point the two of them emigrated to Caracas, where I went to visit her with my mother. (Or maybe they met in Caracas - but I know they also spent time in Paris together). They lived in walled-in community in a fancy condo as I recall, which I visited on Christmas/ New Years when I was in high school. She adopted a child - I don't know if as an infant or if the child was of an employee/ friend who died or who couldn't take care of her. I think she and the adopted daughter did not have an easy relationship. They had a live-in maid. She owned (I think) and ran a store for tourists somewhere in Caracas, or maybe at a beach resort. I only remember that maybe it was for well-off tourists - maybe clothes, jewelry? It seemed quite a trek from the house. My sense was that Marcel ran the house and she did the work in the outside world. But these are memories of a teenager. Marcel may have done some sculpting and painting as well.

At a certain moment - I was in my twenties I think so 1980s probably, they both decided they wanted to leave Venezuela, and they moved to Ibiza, Spain. They had a beautiful place there, a finca outside of the main city, maybe an hour or so outside. I may still have the address somewhere in some of my mother's address books. My mother went to visit a couple of times, and I went once on my own. They seemed to have a lovely life with Marcel working and having a rich household full of visiting artists and guests. I think it was very hard for Mary when Marcel died - probably devastating. I spoke to her a couple of times while he was still alive and after when my mother was still alive. After he died, some young men seemed to be living in the house and taking care of her. My mother made it seem like she was somehow ambivalent about this - I don't know what happened as her Spanish phone number stopped working at a certain point. I probably last spoke with her soon after my mother died - fall of 2009. She seemed a bit sad (of course we were talking about my mother) and weak.

Mary had a very "stiff upper lip" to use the British phrase. Like my mother, it was kind of just : grin and bear it- no complaints, pull yourself up by your hair and get on with it. My mother was close to her until the end - as she was with all the girl

cousins as I've mentioned many time - Pipsi, Mary, Bibette - and they always spoke Hungarian on the phone, so I don't know about her 'bad' Hungarian. Maybe she had an accent or made grammar mistakes, but she and my mother always spoke Hungarian, not German.

My mother had always told me that she had made fake ids towards the end of the war and that she was very brave, and that she worked at the Railway... This happened when my mother was already out of Hungary, so she only would have heard about it from Mary herself, confirmed by Iren.

Best wishes,

Irina

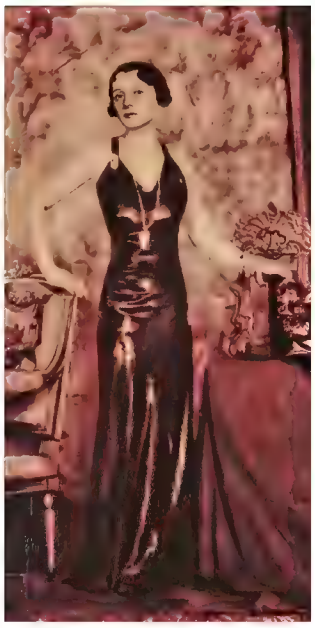

Figure 145.
Dóra Groedel, Szinhazi Elet 1933 - "From Pest Society"

r Emil und Reichsfreifrau Theodora von Taxis-Bordogna geb. Freiin Groedel von Gyulafalva und Bogdán

Figure 146.
Emil Taxis and Baroness Dóra Groedel, January 1919

DORA (1893-1957)

As a woman in high-society and daughter of Baron Bernhard Groedel, Baroness Dóra Groedel, at age 42, was on her second marriage, this time in 1935 to Lajos Korbuly, a landowner and investor in the Groedel business. Her first was to Baron Emil Taxis von Bordogna und Valnigra in 1915. Taxis, who was a well-known figure in Budapest's night life, was a hussar lieutenant and racing stable owner. He came from a distinguished but impoverished Austrian aristocratic family. When he married Dora, Baron Taxis received a very large dowry, which he soon gambled away with much of it spent on girlfriends. Dora simply limited herself to gambling. Once Emil ran out of funds after Bernhard stopped the money supply, he disappeared from Europe, went to America, but returned shortly afterwards as it was not to his liking because he didn't like work very much. They divorced.

In about July 1916, Dóra gave birth to a son, Egon Taxis von Bordogna und Valnigra." He survived for only 13 months and died on August 20, 1917 from bronchitis. This is the first and only indication that Dóra had a child.

At the age of 42, Baroness Dóra, a prominent woman in high-society, entered into her second marriage in 1935 with Lajos Korbuly. Besides being an investor in the Groedel business, Korbuly was a landowner.

The magazine, Szinházi Elet, once wrote about Dora: "An interesting phenomenon was Baroness Dora Groedel Taxis, whom the capital's ball-going public knows well from various carnival occasions." In addition, Dóra was ahead of her time as she was an early female automobile driver in Budapest in 1926.

As a child, Dora began collecting dolls and miniature sets of a variety of rooms. Eventually, her collection became well-known. On August 1, 1929, the magazine ***A Műgyüjtő*** (The Art Collector) published an article about her collection complete with numerous photographs. The opening paragraphs read as follows:"

Figure 147.

Wedding photo of Dóra and Emil:
June 10, 1915

Figure 148.
Baroness Dóra Groedel:
date unk

Figure 149.
Dora driving her father's Mercedes in 1914

Figure 150.
Dora's miniature doll house

Figure 151.
Dora's miniature collection

Half an hour in a toy collection: Baroness Dóra Groedel's baby rooms

In the mansion on Lendvay street, which is full of more and more beautiful antiquities, exquisite pictures and paintings, there is also a particularly charming collection, which is further closed as a whole, and this is the children's toy collection of Baroness Dóra Groedel. It may not compete with the public collections of Nuremberg and Munich, which are distinguished by the big museums, but it has a lot of kindness, naive charm and conscious taste. It is, so to speak, the fruit of an artistic attraction discovered with the eyes of a child, from which the young girl's psyche radiates most clearly. Is there a greater treasure than when someone can transfer the figures of their childhood dreams to their adult collecting activities? This is what we ask ourselves, while on our half-hour walk we take a look at the famous toy collection of the baroness, now abroad, some of whose graceful pieces we present in our pictures.

There is perhaps no collection more tailored to the individual than toy and doll collecting. Most of the objects are small trinkets on their own, but their juxtaposition and arrangement give the collection its own unique character. There is no question that there are not first-class pieces among them. We find these especially among the furniture made for guilds. A tabernacle from the time of Mária Theresa really only differs in size from the "real" tabernacles that decorate every apartment.

As a high-society woman, Dora was frequently well-dressed. In 1933, Szinhazi Elet published[124] a column on dressing elegance, placing Dóra high on their list.

—First of all, I would mention tycoon ladies.

"For example?"

For example, the wife of Prince Bélá Odescalchi, Countess Cartier Almássy Jacqueline, whose refined and discreetly luxurious elegance is well known. Immediately following them in the same rank are Count Gyulán Somssich, Countess Károlyn Odescalchi, Countess Klára Andrássy and Countess Julia Pálffy Ferient Apponyi, otherwise the wife of Count József Pálffy Daun. According to the findings of the fashion salons, the wife of Count Sándor Khuen-Héderváry and Countess Mária Bolza Zichy

[124] *April 5, 1933*

Domokosné most recently belong to this ranking, as well as Baroness Lili Hatvany, who also has an individual controlling power in women's fashion. Baroness Dóra Groedel and Baron Hátrány Bertalarui belong to the same line again..."

Dora was also seen many places including the racetrack where it was noted that she was wearing a "silver-grey coat with Persian ornaments..."

(Theatrical Life, 1935.) One evening chases the other and there are parties going on until dawn everywhere. The biggest evening of the week undoubtedly took place at Baroness Dóra Groedel's, in the luxurious Groedel mansion in the city park, where at least eighty of the best Pest society gathered."

In 1941, Dóra met a man named Szigfrid Róna. Both were eventually arrested and imprisoned for fraud. Róna was a well-known con artist, and Dora played right into his hands. Dóra was arrested, tried, and found guilty of being complicit in a fraud. She was sentenced to six months in prison, but after her appeal which lasted about a year, her sentence was reduced to aiding and abetting with four months in prison. Róna was sentenced to four years.

Figure 152.
Dora Groedel, Színházi Élet
April 5, 1931

Magyarság: September 21, 1941

The Criminal Investigation Department of the Police Headquarters issued a radio search warrant at noon on Saturday for Szigfrid Róna, a 58-year-old Jewish former stockbroker, who, according to the investigation, is the main protagonist in one of the biggest jewelry fraud cases in recent times. Police conducted an on-the-spot investigation at noon on Saturday at the safe deposit box of the Hermes Bank headquarters in Petőfi Sádor Street, led by police captain Dr. Zoltán Radnay.

It was in the first days of August that former Jewish banker Szigfrid Róna, who had already been convicted of sixteen counts of fraud, turned up at the apartment of Baroness Dóra Groedel at 44 Váci utca. She produced a sealed and paper-wrapped parcel, which she claimed contained jewelry belonging to a noble family and that she had been entrusted with the sale of the jewelry. However, the noble family did not want their name to be circulated in the sale and the banker asked the Baroness to accept the jewelry in name as the legacy of the Groedel family.

Róna then presented a list of the estate, which included two gold pens, two brilliant rings and two pearl necklaces, worth more than 140,000 pengo. The Baroness scanned the list and then confirmed in writing that she would accept the jewelry

collection in the parcel as part of her estate. With this certificate and the parcel, Szigfrid Róna went to the jeweler Zoltán Ringwald of Wesselényi Street and stated that the Groedel family wished to sell the jewelry bequest, which was now in his possession. He said that the family wished that the seals should not be broken until 8 September, and that he and Róna Szigfrid would keep the valuable legacy in the Hermes Bank safe until then. He asked the jeweler, as the agent for the sale, to advance him a loan of 5,000 pence, which he would repay promptly after the estate was opened.

Ringwald, a jeweler, fell victim to the devious swindler's tale and gave Rona the 5,000 pence loan. Róna then placed the package in the safe of the Hermes Bank and gave the key to his friend, Mrs. Klárán Magos Etelnek Gottlieb. 8 September passed, but Szigfrid Róna did not turn up, and when she went to the jeweler's flat in Smelwreiss Street to look for him, she found the banker not at home. Zoltán Ringwald then reported the case to the police together with Mrs Kálmán Magos.

This was the background to the investigating magistrate's decision on Saturday morning to authorize the opening of the Hermes Bank safe and the examination of the package inside. During a tense wait, the safe was opened on the orders of Police Commissioner Dr. Zoltán Radnay, in the presence of jeweler Zoltán Ringwald and Mrs. Kálmán Magos. Three packages were found in the safe. The first box was broken open and when the contents were removed, the jeweler Ringwald was shocked to see that the package, which he had listed as the legacy of Baroness Dóra Groedel, contained a newspaper-wrapped piece of asphalt. Those present had hoped that they might find the jewels in the other two parcels, but when they were opened, they found that they were also cardboard. The police believe that it is likely that the former Jewish banker committed similar fraud and abuse with the other two packages. It is therefore of paramount public interest that the investigation establishes who the new victims are, who have been defrauded by the high-style swindler. It is hoped that the Jewish conartist will soon be caught by the police after the radio circular is made public.

Just days later, after her arrest on fraud charges in the Jewelry case, Dora was again arrested, this time for theft. She was acquitted.

Ujság October 3, 1941

BARONESS GROEDEL, ACCUSED OF FRAUD, ACQUITTED

Baroness Groedel was acquitted of a fraud charge. In recent weeks, Baroness Dóra Groedel, wife of Lajos Korbuly, was arrested in connection with a jewelry fraud. Days later, however, she was released and on Thursday she was charged with fraud. Paul Marton was reported by a radio company for buying an Orion set worth 219 pence on credit, failing to make payments and failing to disclose his troubled financial circumstances. The baroness denied her guilt, said she had not intended to deceive the trader, that she had ample funds and collateral for the purchase price, because she owned 340 acres of land and a large vineyard in the Pest district. In fact, he forgot about the radio and that is what led to the denunciation. The court, after taking evidence, acquitted the baroness of the charge because it found that no crime had been committed. It had not been proven that she had deceived the radio company and that she had acted with fraudulent intent.

November 22, 1941

Baroness Dóra Groedel was sentenced to ten months in prison in a jewelry fraud case

On Friday, Judge Ferenc Nagy held the main hearing in the jewelry fraud case, the victim of which was jewelry dealer Zoltán Ringwald. The defendants in the trial were Etel Gottlieb, born Kálmán Magos, as the accomplice of the bank commissioner Róna Szigfried, who was on the run, and Baroness Dóra Groedel, wife of Lajos Korbuly, as an accomplice. According to the indictment, on August 27 of this year, Kálmánná Magos and Róna Szigfried allegedly handed family jewels to Zoltán Ringwald in a package sealed with the seal of the Baron Groedel family and told him that the two gold bars in the sealed package were for sale. An advance of five thousand pengos was taken for the transaction, with which Róna Szigfried then escaped. At Ringwald, they didn't come forward to open the package until the jeweler turned to the police and was shocked to find that there were stones in the officially opened package. Kálmánná Magos, who was interrogated as a woman at the main hearing on Friday, pleaded not guilty and defended herself in good faith. Dóra Groedel also stated that, as far as she knew, there were jewels in the package and that is why she complied with the bank commissioner's request to affix the seal of the Baron Groedel family to the package. The tribunal also questioned jeweler Zoltán Ringwald,

and after questioning a few more witnesses, pronounced Magos guilty in its verdict, and sentenced her to one year in prison, as well as Baroness Dóra Groedel Korbuly, who was sentenced to ten months in prison and a fine of five hundred pengos. The judgment is not final. The court released Magos.

8 Órai Ujság January 10, 1942

In August last year, Szigfrid Róna entered Zoltán Ringwald's jewelry shop in Wesselényi Street with Mrs Kálmán Magosi and swindled a loan of 5,000 pengo for a heavy, sealed parcel, which they claimed contained the "Baron Groedel" jewelry bequest. A few months later, Ringwald became suspicious and, with a police committee, opened the parcel deposited at a branch of the Hermes Bank - which contained a collection of asphalt chips. An investigation was launched, and some members of the company, including Baroness Dora Groedel, were already prosecuted. But Szigfrid Róna disappeared. The police found him yesterday afternoon in a house on Rákóczi Street, where he was staying under the pseudonym of Jenő Géza Kovács. In front of Detective Inspector Pál Ruth, Róna did not protest or argue: - "Yes, in the Groedel case," he said with a smile, "I thought they were looking for me because of another case ... Szigfrid Róna confessed everything at the police headquarters, including another 1,000-pengo fraud. The fraudster, who had a bad record and six previous convictions, was arrested. (eventually found guilty and sentenced to four years of hard labor.)

Peter Buza wrote an extensive article in 1984 about the Bernhard Groedel residence currently at Dozsa Gyorgy ut 98 and its occupants. One section focused on Dóra, whom the author met in the past.

In this beautiful mansion, the Groedels lived the life of the bourgeoisie of Pest, which had grown into a cosmopolitan city, without any events to speak of. In 1934, the head of the family died, while his daughter Theodora, born in 1885, married twice, first to Emil Thum und Taxis, a member of a family of European renown ("he was a very handsome boy, a hussar! He always paraded in his hussar costume... but he was a merciful, good-for-nothing, good-for-nothing fellow ... he married my cousin for her money ..."), and after a few years of divorce, to Lajos Korbuly, the son of an Arad landowner. Dóra Groedel indulged an interesting passion. Her passion was accompanied by good taste and a deep knowledge of the subject. In the mansion on Lendvay Street, which was full of beautiful antiques, fine paintings and pictures, there was also a curious collection: the collection of children's toys by Dora Groedel. At first

there was perhaps only an empty doll's room, and little by little all the furniture was put in its place. Then a stove, a lamp, a matching miniature rug... Sections, almshouses, desks. Baby kitchens furnished with china and pewter. Whole little mansions, several storeys high.

The collector herself told about his treasures in 1929, when she was asked for a statement by the Art Collector magazine: 'It is a very difficult collection, because it is rare, with a lot of effort and travel to get these objects... I want to develop my collection as long as I live and my circumstances permit. After my death, it will go to a museum. I don't know to which country they will be sent. But perhaps we shouldn't talk about that. For there is nothing sadder for a collector than to remember that the objects of his passion are scattered to the winds. And such tiny, innocent things ..." To which country did they "wander"? There is probably no country in Europe to which "these innocent little things" have not found their way. A modern-day toy collector tells me what happened to the private museum, which is renowned among experts throughout Europe. She was already living at 44 Váci utca, in a small apartment in the courtyard. The rooms were cluttered with precious objects. But by then, much of the collection had been lost. During the war, someone had 'kept' some of it and then 'forgotten' to give it back. We bought a few items from the modest, soft-spoken woman. It was hard to part with them, but she had to.

In 1938, the newlyweds sold the Lendvay Street mansion to Palandsian Nishan, a wealthy Iranian-Armenian leather merchant. The Groedel family moved to Váci Street 44, where Dóra Groedel died in the late 1950s.

Reading further, Buza writes a bit about the history of the villa:

Irén Groedel has lived in Lendvay Street since 1905. She still lives in that street, of course, in significantly more modest conditions than before, which was the family's "base" in the years after the turn of the century, in one of the houses in which they invested a significant part of their wealth. Ármin Groedel owned houses No. 18 and 20 in 1899, and No. 26 in 1904. His brother Bernát Groedel moved into Lendvay utca 28 in 1905. The plaster was still wet, the halls and rooms smelled fresh and untouched. It had just been completed when its builder, Henrik Géza Brüll - a wealthy industrialist and merchant - was forced to sell. Bernát Groedel, his wife, Margit Stern, and their then ten-year-old daughter, Dórá, moved into the tastefully designed building. The building permit - issued in 1900 - calls the large house a holiday home. Anyone who looks around Hősök Square these days will certainly no-

tice this well-proportioned villa. It stands on the corner of the former Aréna (today: Dózsa György) út and the small, shady Lendvay utca, and the square is clearly visible from all points. The fact that the annex, connected to the main building through the gate arch, floats in space like a guide fish next to a shark gives the building a special mass effect. The carriages were once kept here, the stable was also here, and the horsemen, coachmen and valets lived on the first floor. It was later converted into a garage when more horsepower became fashionable. Two wrote down the plans: Aladár Kármán and Gyula Ullmann. Among them, the better-known Kármán, the architect who worked together for decades, is the dual leader. He was born in Budapest in 1871 and died in the capital in 1939. He learned the art of the craft in Munich, and shortly after his student years he specialized in the design of apartment buildings. For example, Akadémia utca 19-21 was born in his studio. the eclectic-style apartment complex at no. From the outside, the Art Nouveau mansion on Lendvay Street has a romantic atmosphere. The neo-Gothic style also appears in the spacious hall. Especially the carved railing delimiting the upstairs corridor represents this style. The wooden paneling and carved doors are once again colorful with Art Nouveau motifs, as are the beautifully polished glass panes.

The hall opens onto the former dining room, the meeting room of the State Ecclesiastical Office, which owned the building. Here, the interior was shaped by neo-Renaissance taste. The original tapestry still covers the walls, and is still very beautiful. Probably made in a French workshop. The green marble of the fireplace is of Italian origin. This precious material, now rarely used, is quarried in the southern Alps. At the turn of the century, it was a fashionable stone in wealthy Budapest. Then every wealthy builder had something carved from it for interior decoration and furnishings.

An article published in 2013 discussing Moskovszky doll collection, discusses the origination of many pieces as belonging to Dora:

How the objects ended up in the collection also provides important information. It is natural that Éva Moskovszky's old teddy bears also have their place: some of the pieces made in the 1930s and 1940s are products of the famous Steiff toy factory, or the work of Miss Hoffmann from Budapest. However, the most valuable pieces were once the objects of another collector. Baroness Dóra Groedel has been collecting toys since she was a child, and in the early 1900s she was almost alone in the monarchy with this hobby. Dóra Groedel's grandfather was a Jewish craftsman who became a wealthy businessman, the family

acquired nobility in 1903. Theodora Groedel married Count Emerch von Thurn und Taxis and lived a bourgeois life. After her husband left her, she married landowner Lajos Korbuly. The married couple accumulated a lot of art objects, furnished small rooms from Dóra's toy collection, but did not place their dolls in them. An article about his hobby was published in the 1929 issue of Műbógőlő, and the photos also show the small pieces of furniture that ended up in the Moskovszky collection after the war. Dóra - who wanted to leave the collection to a museum after her death - was forced to sell the wonderful pieces after 1945. A special 18th-century Nuremberg doll's kitchen with hand-hammered red copper pots and pewter plates, but also that fantastic chessboard inlaid dining room cabinet made in the 1760s, which was one of Éva Moskovszky's most cherished treasures...

Figure 153.
Original caption:
"The inlaid chessboard dining table made in 1760 was also in the Dora Groedel collection

Fejér Megyei Hirlap (Fejér County Gazette) mentioned the collection again in their March 9, 2019 issue, and how Dora gave some of the more interesting pieces to Évá Moskovszky.

THE CRITICS

As a rapidly expanding and highly successful business led by Jewish entrepreneurs of foreign origin, the Groedel family enterprise attracted both admiration and controversy. While their achievements in the timber industry were undeniable, they also became the target of accusations, ranging from unethical business practices to nationalist resentment and anti-Semitic prejudices. This chapter examines the major critiques levied against the Groedels, the credibility of those claims, and the broader economic and political forces at play in early 20th-century Hungary.

Criticism of Ennoblement & National Identity

Following their ennoblement in 1903, and their elevation to "Baron" in 1905, the Groedels faced intense scrutiny in the press. Detractors questioned why "foreigners" who did not speak Hungarian fluently—the family primarily spoke German—were granted noble status. Some publications accused them of obtaining their titles through bribery and political maneuvering rather than through merit or service to the state. These criticisms ignored key facts: Hermann Groedel had obtained Hungarian citizenship in 1890, and his family had made substantial charitable contributions to a variety of organizations, including a donation of 100,000 gold crowns to the Institute for the Blind in Cluj.

More broadly, these attacks reflected anxieties about the growing economic influence of Jewish entrepreneurs and resentment toward the changing social structure under Emperor Franz Joseph. Critics like novelist and columnist Árpád Zigány lamented that nobility was increasingly conferred based on wealth rather than military service or political loyalty, further fueling nationalistic opposition to families like the Groedels.

Business Ethics & Corruption Allegations

By the early 20th century, accusations of unethical business practices against the Groedels began to circulate. Articles alleged bribery, tax evasion, and collusion, portraying the family as reaping enormous profits at the expense of the state and small landowners. One of the most vocal critics, Zoltán Lengyel, a member of parliament, claimed that up to 20,000 individuals had been bribed

in connection with forest-related frauds or "panamas." Given the fragmented legal frameworks between Austria, Hungary, and Romania, corruption in the timber industry was widely acknowledged, and the Groedels were singled out as prime examples.

Evidence suggests that several high-ranking government officials did have close financial ties to the Groedel business. These included Károly Hieronymi, former interior minister and later minister of trade overseeing railways crucial to the timber industry; Baron Artúr Feilitzsch, State Secretary of Agriculture who had direct oversight of Hungary's forests; and Géza Polonyi, future minister of justice. Critics saw these relationships as clear conflicts of interest, raising concerns that government policies might have favored the Groedels' commercial ventures.

Also invested in the company were Jozsef Potsa, the Chief Lord of Háromszék county, which includes Kommando and Covasna; MEP Lonyay; MEP Ödön Barta, a Jewish member of the oppositional national liberal Independence Party; MEP Géza Polonyi, who later became the minister of justice; jurist Dionys Sebess, and others. After Polonyi assumed the role of minister of justice, he appointed Sebess to head the specially organized Transylvanian judicial division. One can imagine the potential impact of Sebess's appointment on lawsuits and other government concerns related to the Groedel business.

However, judging their actions by contemporary standards might not fully reflect the practices prevalent in the early 1900s, given the absence of developed safety regulations and different ethical norms of the time.

One particularly revealing case involved a forest auction in Gyergyószentmiklós, Romania. When the Götz company outbid the Groedels for the rights to a 1,500-hectare forest, Hermann Groedel allegedly sent his director, Móric Horn, to intervene. Horn reportedly persuaded the sellers to withdraw from the deal by offering them 30 crowns per hectare above Götz's bid—under a contract structured as an "option" rather than a firm sale. This maneuver prevented Götz from securing the land, but when the option expired, the Groedels did not complete the purchase, leaving the sellers with nothing. Critics like Zigány painted this as a deliberate scheme to block competitors from entering Transylvania, reinforcing perceptions of the Groedels as ruthless businessmen.

Worker Conditions & Environmental Concerns

Beyond financial dealings, the Groedels faced scrutiny over working conditions in their mills and logging sites. *Anna Lato,* who had firsthand knowledge of their operations as her father was the chief engineer in Kommando, wrote extensively about the widespread environmental devastation caused by logging practices and the dangers faced by workers in Kommando and Covasna. She highlighted numerous instances of severe injuries and fatalities, including a 1905 locomotive collision that killed a woman and seriously injured two others. An article in *Népszava* in 1906 claimed that at the Groedel plant alone, "40-50 workers had lost their lives, and 250-300 had suffered serious injuries"—though no corroborating records were provided.

Lato also criticized the exploitation of the Székely people, many of whom worked as laborers on Groedel-owned properties. She argued that they received disproportionately low wages despite their forests generating substantial profits. Lato was also angered by the perceived arrogance and poor management of the younger Groedels (Barons Richard, Albert, and Otto), whom she felt didn't care or take the time to understand the Székely people and their culture. By 1936, discontent led to a workers' strike in Kommando, though it ultimately failed.

Zigány: A Flawed Critic

Among the Groedels' harshest critics, Árpád Zigány portrayed himself as an anti-corruption crusader exposing the unethical practices of the Hungarian timber industry. However, his credibility is marred by evidence of his own opportunistic and anti-Semitic behavior. In 1905, he was arrested for treason, accused of publishing a pamphlet advocating for Emperor Franz Joseph to be replaced by the German Kaiser. In 1906, he compiled two pamphlets named "Panama Studies," with the second, titled "The Prince of Máramaros," (the prince being Hermann) consisting of a 40-page document primarily focused on the Groedel brothers' business that contained defamatory allegations. He was caught attempting to blackmail the Groedels, demanding 80,000 crowns to suppress his exposé.

The blackmail case resulted in legal proceedings, during which Zigány was recorded negotiating payment for not publishing his pamphlet. Móric Horn, director of the Groedel company, secretly involved the police in the transaction, leading to Zigány's arrest.

Shortly before the publication of the Panama Studies pamphlet, the Groedels received a confidential notice about Zigány's impending exposé on the company's practices. Acting on this information, Horn instructed David Rosenfeld to negotiate with a middleman, Mano Bloch, and Zigány to prevent publication and purchase the pamphlet. The ensuing legal proceedings include the following excerpt from the indictment clarified for readability:

On the evening of September 3, 1906, Árpád Zigány met with Móric Horn in Braşov and demanded 80,000 crowns in exchange for suppressing the publication of his pamphlet or transferring the existing copies. After negotiations, they agreed on a sum of 30,000 crowns, with Horn immediately paying a 2,000-crown advance and promising the remaining 28,000 crowns once Zigány handed over the pamphlets.

Zigány and his intermediary, Mano Bloch, later denied that this payment was related to the pamphlet. Instead, they claimed that the 30,000 crowns were compensation for a failed lumber mediation deal, asserting that Horn had interfered with their negotiations and caused them to lose an expected profit of 50,000 crowns. They argued that, since they had reconciled with Horn, it would have been inappropriate for them to continue publishing negative content about him and the company.

However, their defense was dismissed by the court. Witness testimony from Horn and Rosenfeld, who conducted the negotiations, contradicted their claims. Additionally, detectives Dimény and Lebovits, who had secretly listened in on the conversation, confirmed that the discussion was exclusively about suppressing the pamphlet. Given these findings, the court determined that the charge was justified."

However, because the detectives failed to capture direct evidence of a threat, he was acquitted.

Despite his legal troubles, Zigány continued publishing accusations against the Groedels. He claimed Hermann had defrauded the Romanian treasury by illegally removing official markings from felled logs to avoid taxation. His most inflammatory statement summarized his view of the Groedel's business practices:

"Once during a rather perilous scheme when they were removing the treasury's mark from felled timber, an official he was using for the deed anxiously stated that one could be jailed for this. 'But not in Hungary' Hermann answered with ironic arrogance, naturally in German. The secret to the Groedel Company's sudden and miraculous rise to fortune lay in these appallingly embarrassing and truthful words.

These words express the corruption that makes it possible for leaches like the Groedels to spread and grow."

In a final claim, Zigány accuses the business of stealing wood by conspiring with treasury employees and by bribing the forest wardens and even the higher-level employees. He claims that on February 22, 1892, the business paid 3,900 forints to Karády, a former forest warden.

"Why and with what services to the Groedel Company did the treasury forest warden earn such a horrendous amount of money of 3,900? It is to be understood that forest wardens are poorly paid and earn about 15 to 20 forints a month and would not be able to earn such an amount from the treasury in 20 years. And, that not "only" Karády was bribed by Groedel can be shown by the fact that several other treasury forest wardens, who were in contact with the company, left their jobs with the treasury possessing sizable amounts of wealth. And with 15 to 20 forints a month, not only can one not accumulate wealth, but one cannot even make a living on that."

Legacy & Rebuttals

Despite these numerous accusations, no substantial legal action was ever taken against the Groedels. Unlike their critics, the family rarely engaged in public rebuttals, leaving many of these claims unanswered. However, contemporary observers such as *Abraham Herschkovits*, director of the Groedel furniture factory, offered a counter-narrative. In a 1930 tribute following Hermann's death, he wrote:

"All that needs to be pointed out is his genius ventures, which made his name known in world relations and provided livelihoods for many tens of thousands of people... It was his principle to expect a good job only from a well-paid worker. He provided a decent retirement allowance to his officers and workers... Baron Hermann Groedel left a lasting memory in Máramaros. The grandchildren of these people will also remember him with grace."

While the Groedels operated within a business culture where corruption and aggressive expansion were common, the extent of their alleged wrongdoings remains uncertain. Their story, marked by both commercial triumph and controversy, underscores the complex interplay of wealth, power, and national identity in early 20th-century Hungary. Whether viewed as shrewd industrialists, ruthless capitalists, or victims of bias, the Groedel family remains an emblem of the era's intricate socio-political landscape.

MEMORIES OF A CHILD

Memories of a Child in Budapest, Hungary 1956

By Zora Svab Maliga

November 4, 2020

I was ten years old. It was a dark, cold October. I was practicing boring "der," "die," "das" German pronouns with my sister, Erzsi, who was eight years old, and my strict Grandmother, Irene.

My father ran home enthusiastically that day, October 23, around 5 PM, and told me German class could wait. We have to go to the nearby square because "history is happening" and we should witness it. I was not very interested in history, but we had to follow our father.

A huge statue of Stalin stood in Stalin square, which was not 5 minutes from our apartment at 26 Lendvay street. When we got there, it was dark. A big crowd of people was shouting and running around the Stalin statue, which had been broken off at the pedestal just above the boot and was being pulled down. They invited us to climb onto a pickup truck, which I refused. I was frightened, and this was an absolute no-no for me. I was never adventurous and went home alone. That is when the crowd started moving toward the radio station building, where the shooting first started.

My sister and my father came home after a while. The next day we did not go to school, and the following day we did not go to school again, and it was nice.

We heard all kinds of news. We heard that shooting was going on, and dead people were seen on the streets. We were not allowed to leave home. Some of the Soviet soldiers stationed in Hungary were fighting on the side of the Hungarian revolutionaries. Soon enough, they were taken back to the Soviet Union, and new soldiers were brought in.

On the dawn of November 4, I woke up to a big noise. I sat kneeling on my bed and looking out of the window onto Dozsa Gyorgy Street, where I saw tank after tank rushing in. They were not driving in an orderly way, as I was used to seeing during annual drills held every April. I enjoyed watching those drills

and recognized immediately that this was different. The tanks pulled in at full speed, blowing thick clouds of dark smoke as they went.

In the morning, our prime minister, Imre Nagy, announced on the radio that the Soviet tanks had arrived in Budapest. From that time forward, the Hungarian radio played only music such as the Hymn and the Beethoven Egmont Overture. However, we all preferred to listen to the voice of Radio Free Europe from Munich, which broadcasted in Hungarian. They encouraged fighting, raising hope that aid was imminent, but it never arrived. It was clear that the revolution would be over. We wished that the West would come to help our revolution, but now it was clear that this was unrealistic. We realized that the West decided Hungary was not important enough for western countries to fight the mighty Soviet Union.

The newly arrived Soviet soldiers had been told they would fight the Capitalists for control of the Suez Canal. When they arrived in Budapest, they thought the Duna [Danube] was the Suez Canal in Egypt.

The fighting lasted several weeks, during which tanks destroyed buildings and numerous lives were lost.

The fighting once also came very close to our house. Our street, Lendvay street, is short, consisting of just three blocks. This stretch of road contains our house at one end and the Russian embassy at the other end. At one point, two Russian tanks were shooting at each other; one positioned at our house and the other at the Russian embassy. One of our bedroom windows shattered, and a balcony got a hit from the shelling.

We spent a few days in the cellar during the shelling with all the other people living in our apartment house. All of us children enjoyed it, being in the dark, spooky labyrinth, using only candlelight. We found it exciting and romantic. Maybe it is inappropriate to say, but thinking back to that time, as children, we had a good time at home. Our family was together; we played cards, read, knitted, and talked to each other; we were not afraid.

We did not have problems with food. Of course, my father did not go out for food shopping because the soldiers sometimes shot people lining up for food. My mother had vivid memories of starvation during the six-week siege of Budapest in the winter of 1944, so we had piled up pasta, beans, cacao,

sugar, and some canned food at home, just in case. At the end of October, my mother, who worked about 200 miles away in the North-East of Hungary, arrived partly by train, partly walking with a backpack full of apples and potatoes. We had enough supplies for all six of us – me and Erzsi, our parents, and our two grandmothers. Fortunately, our apartment had electricity and running water.

In a few months, the fighting was over. We went back to school, but some of our classmates did not return; they had emigrated. The "der," "die" "das" German lessons started in the afternoons much earlier. Life went on.

About 50 years later, I spoke with my Russian friend and colleague, Irina, about the revolution and the tanks. During the revolution, she lived in Lvov, which was in the Soviet Union. The apartment where she lived was on the main street, where for several nights from her window in the dark, she saw an endless line of tanks rushing westward. She had seen the same tanks just a few days before I saw them on our street in Budapest.

Zora

Hungarian Revolution: Background [from Wikipedia]

The Hungarian Revolution of 1956, or the Hungarian Uprising, was a nationwide revolution against the Hungarian People's Republic and its Soviet-imposed policies, lasting from 23 October until 10 November 1956. Leaderless at the beginning, it was the first major threat to Soviet control since the Red Army drove Nazi Germany from its territory at the End of World War II in Europe.

The revolt began as a student protest, which attracted thousands as they marched through central Budapest to the Hungarian Parliament building, calling out on the streets using a van with loudspeakers. A student delegation, entering the radio building to try to broadcast the students' demands, was detained. When the delegation's release was demanded by the protesters outside, they were fired upon from within the building by the State Security Police, known as the *ÁVH* (acronym for *Államvédelmi Hatóság*, literally "State Protection Authority"). Multiple students died and one was wrapped in a flag and held above the crowd. This was the start of the next phase of the revolution. As the news spread, disorder and violence erupted throughout the capital.

The revolt spread quickly and the government collapsed. Thousands orga-

nized themselves into militias, battling the ÁVH and Soviet troops. During the revolt there were violent incidents; some local leaders and ÁVH members were lynched or captured, while former political prisoners were released and armed. Radical impromptu workers' councils wrested municipal control from the ruling Hungarian Working People's Party and demanded political change. The new government of Imre Nagy formally disbanded the ÁVH, declared its intention to withdraw from the Warsaw Pact and pledged to re-establish free elections. By the end of October, fighting had almost stopped, and the days of normality began to return. Some workers continued fighting in opposition to both the Stalinist regime and the appearances of "bourgeois" parties in its wake.

Initially appearing open to negotiating a withdrawal of Soviet forces, the Politburo changed its mind and moved to crush the revolution. On 4 November, a large Soviet force invaded Budapest and other regions of the country. The Hungarian resistance continued until 10 November. Over 2,500 Hungarians and 700 Soviet troops were killed in the conflict, and 200,000 Hungarians fled as refugees. Mass arrests and denunciations continued for months thereafter. By January 1957, the new Soviet-installed government had suppressed all public opposition. These Soviet actions, while strengthening control over the Eastern Bloc, alienated many Western Marxists, leading to splits and/or considerable losses of membership for communist parties in capitalist states.

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A Failed Emigration Story in 1949

By Zora Svab Maliga

In 1949 when the communists took over the ruling power of Hungary, my family lost everything.

We lived in the Southern Hungary village of Villany, owning and managing a large vineyard. The state *confiscated* the vineyard and the house. They allowed us to stay in the house, but several poor families moved in with children who brought with them all kinds of bugs, which we caught.

My father was out of work for nine months and had been looking for a job with-

out success. My mother made money from sewing. At that point, they decided to leave Hungary. They did not realize that the penalty for being captured for illegally leaving the country had changed from about six weeks to 6-9 months in jail.

Since they were experts in grape growing and winemaking, one of our relatives - my *father's stepsister [half-sister], Zora, who lived in the United States*, arranged that they get a job in California in a winery. *They told it to their mothers, to (Teleki Lauber Erzsebet) and (Svab Groedel Iren).*

We took the train to a village close to the western border, where someone would meet us and guide us through, walking in the fields in the dark, cold November. I was three and a half years old, and my sister, Erzsi, was two. Our parents sedated us so that we wouldn't cry. My mother carried Erzsi while my father took me. Of course, we were caught. Before our journey began, our parents paid a lot of money to a Budapest lawyer who had a network of smugglers, but the last one was replaced, and unknown to anyone, was a traitor.

We were taken to a railway station in a nearby small town. Our parents had to turn facing the wall, and the AVOS (the State Protection Authority – an external appendage of the Soviet Union's secret police) said to our parents that we would not wake up, creating the story that our parents killed their children. And then we woke up.

Presumably still under the influence of sedation, Erzsi and I, the sweet little girls, turned out to be monsters, running around, screaming, destroying bicycles, and running onto the rails. The AVOS officers were *chasing* us, which did not look good in the passengers' eyes. *Finaly* they allowed that alternatively, my mother and father could stay with us to calm us down, mostly telling us children's stories. My parents were called in the office separately, asking what they were doing in the field? Some people in that situation said that they were "picking flowers", *so for lying, they were beaten up. My parents told, the truth, they were not beaten up. My father succeeded to eat the invitation paper what he got from the California winery.*

Erzsi and I were then taken to an orphanage, while my parents were taken to the AVO jail for six weeks, which was terrible. I know only a few details. *After that, they were moved to a jail in another town, what was much better.* My mother *was doing laundry,* and sewing, while my father was sent to a prison office.

There he also created world puzzles, which the jail then sold to newspapers. That was the nice part of the story; I don't know the bad parts.

After a while, I don't know how long, Erzsi was picked up by a family lawyer who took her back to our grandmother in Villany. She was sitting in the corner, her nose was running, and repeating " no mommy, no papi, no Ori" (Zori).

One time, in the jail cells, the inmates heard that children were running around in the corridor, and the AVOS were teaching them "your father is a criminal, your mother is a whore." Since scarlet fever broke out in the orphanage, they closed it and the children were transferred, to the jail building. While I was in the orphanage, I got infected and had to go to the hospital.

I clearly remember the hospital room, the bed, two little kids (me and another), and we were in a baby bed; the other kids were older. After some time, my parents came to visit me, standing on the street at the open window in a ***guard*** company and brought me candies. I did not get any of them; the older kids took all of them.

When I got over my sickness, *my aunt Erzsi, my mother's sister, and her husband, Pongrac, picked me up and took me to Villany.* My mother was finally released after five months. I immediately recognized her with overwhelming joy, but for Erzsi, it took a little bit longer. My father was in jail for nine months.

From that story, I only remember the hospital; everything else I learned from my mother.

Zora

2020. November 21.

THE GROEDEL FAMILY LEGACY

The Groedel family's story is one of resilience, ambition, and adaptation in the face of both opportunity and adversity. From their ascent as industrialists in the Austro-Hungarian Empire to their struggles against political and economic forces beyond their control, their legacy reflects the broader shifts in European history. Hermann Groedel and his brothers built an empire that embodied the promise of capitalism and modernization, yet they also contended with the deep-seated biases and power struggles that often accompany success. Their achievements were undeniable, but their prominence also made them targets of political maneuvering, anti-Semitic resentment, and accusations of corruption that, in many ways, mirrored the broader currents of their time.

Despite the controversies surrounding their business practices, the Groedel family's contributions to industry and society were significant. They pioneered logging and transportation methods that shaped the timber trade in Central and Eastern Europe, employing thousands and leaving an imprint on both the economy and the environment. Their philanthropy, though often overlooked by critics, supported communities, educational initiatives, and social welfare programs, demonstrating a commitment to the society in which they lived. However, as the world changed—through war, shifting borders, and political upheaval—so too did the Groedel family's fortunes. The turmoil of the 20th century eroded much of what they had built, leaving future generations to grapple with a transformed reality.

As with many families of prominence in pre-war Central Europe, the Groedels' legacy was ultimately shaped by forces beyond their control. The economic collapse following World War I, the rise of nationalism, and later, the devastation of World War II scattered the family and dismantled much of their business empire. Some descendants found refuge abroad, while others endured the consequences of shifting regimes and political persecution. What remains is not just the story of an industrial dynasty, but a reflection of the fragile nature of wealth, influence, and legacy in a world prone to upheaval.

Today, the Groedel name lives on in historical records, family recollections, portraits on the walls of their descendants' homes, and the remnants of the industries they once controlled. Their story is more than one of success and

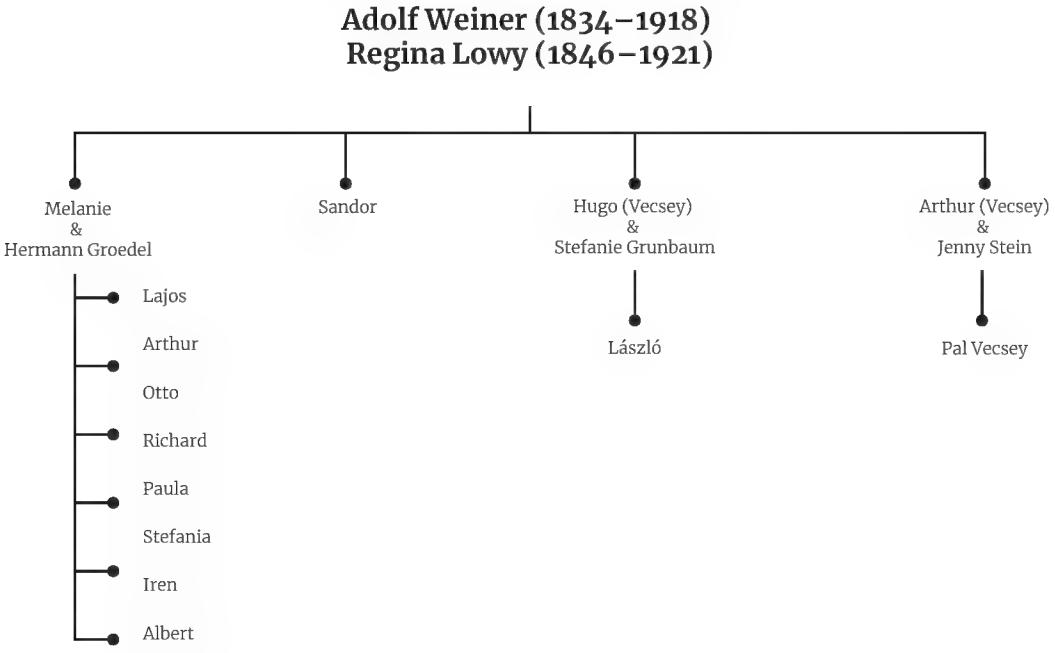
controversy; it is a testament to the complexities of history, where ambition and circumstance collide. While their empire may have faded, their impact endures in the landscapes they helped shape and in the lessons that history offers about perseverance, adaptation, and the ever-changing nature of power and fortune.

BOOK 2
RELATED FAMILY MEMBERS
&
THEIR STORIES

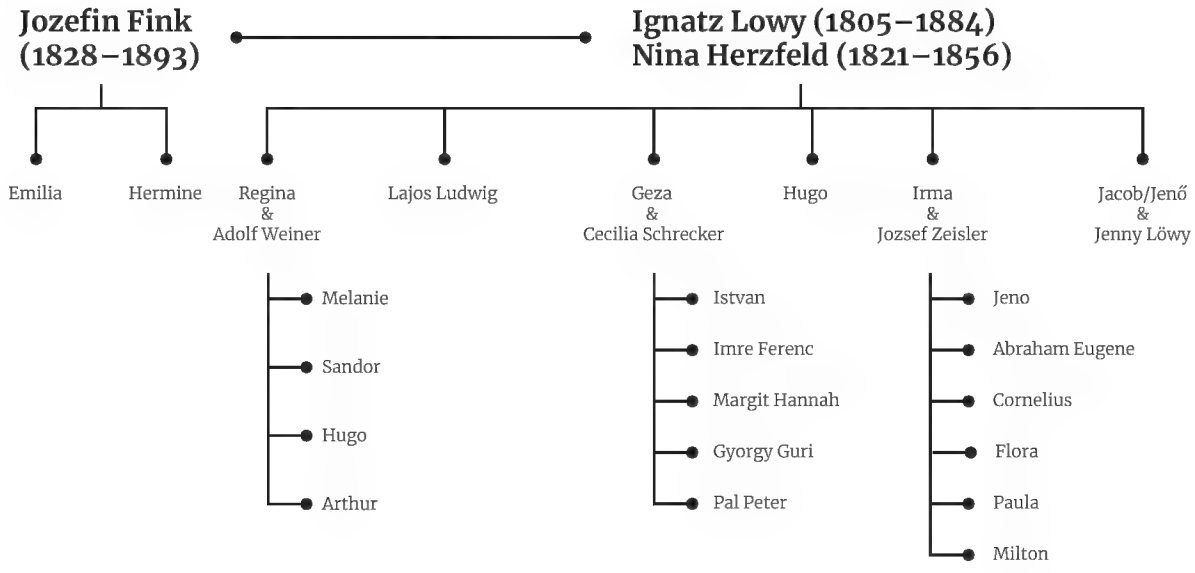
The individuals discussed in this section are descendants of the Löwy and Weiner families that include Lőry and Vécsey respectively via name changes.

In 1885, Hermann Groedel married Carolina Melanie Weiner, whose parents were Adolf Weiner and Regina née Löwy. Both Weiner and Löwy families have interesting members and stories.

WEINER FAMILY TREE



LÖWY FAMILY TREE



WEINER FAMILY
Adolf Weiner: Weiner és Grunbaum

Figure 154.

Grünbaum and Weiner Store, ca. 1894

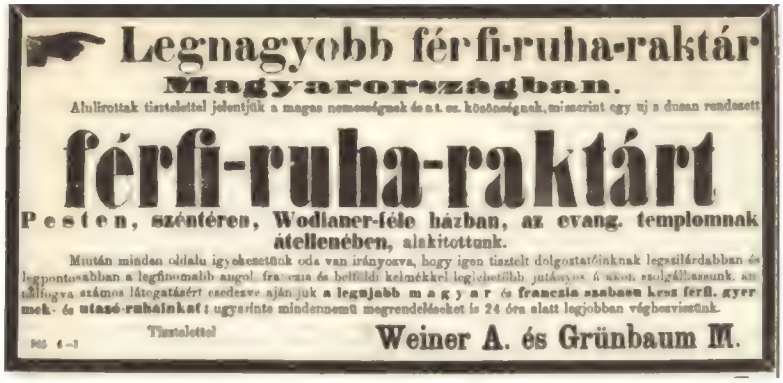
Corner of Hatvani ut. and Ország ut

(today: Kossuth Lajos ut and Károly krt.)

The 1860s marked a productive and transformative era in Hungary's history, particularly for businesses in Pest and Buda, sister cities situated on opposite banks of the Danube. Together, they boasted a combined population of 271,000. Just prior to the close of the decade, Pest saw the consecration of the largest synagogue in Europe, the Dohány Street Synagogue, a distinction it still holds. In 1867, a pivotal moment unfolded with the Austro-Hungarian Compromise, a historic event shaping modern Europe and, notably, Hungary. This Compromise led to the establishment on June 8 of the dual monarchy and the coronation of Emperor of Austria Franz Joseph as King of Hungary. This period witnessed rapid business growth, propelled by the newfound freedoms following the Compromise and the resolution of the war between Austria and Hungary that preceded it.

As you strolled south along Hatvani Street in March 1863 and reached the intersection with Ország Street, you would have found yourself standing before one of Budapest's most fashionable and well-loved men's clothing establish-

ments. Owned by Adolf Weiner and Miksa Grünbaum, the store was known as "Grünbaum és Weiner." Although the partnership began informally before the official registration of the business in 1863, this marked their second store. Their initial location, gaining popularity by 1862, was situated in the Wodianer building, formerly the Kremnitzer house, overlooking the Danube on Déak Square 1, a structure that no longer stands. Branded as "The largest men's clothing store in Hungary," the business thrived having earned an exemplary reputation. The store at the Szentér location (Déak Square 1) bore the name "Weiner és Grunbaüm."


Legnagyobb férfi-ruha-raktár
Magyarországban.
Alulirottak tisztelettel jelentjük a magas nemességnek és a t. cz. közönségnek, miszerint egy uj a dusan rendezett
férfi-ruha-raktárt
Pesten, szentéren, Wodianer-féle házban, az evang. templomnak átellenében, alakitottunk.
Miután minden oldalu igyekezetünk oda van irányozva, hogy igen tisztelt dolgoztatóinknak legszilárdabban és legpontosabban a legfinomabb angol, francia és belföldi kelmékkel legizlésbb jutányos á ron szolgálhassunk, az általunk számos látogatásért esedezve ajánljuk a legujabb magyar és francia szabasu kész férfi. gyermek- és utazó-ruháinkat s ugyanitt mindennemü megrendeléseket is 24 óra alatt legjobban végbevisztünk.
Tisztelettel
Weiner A. és Grünbaum M.

Advertisement in the Pesti Napló, September 28, 1862
Largest men's clothing warehouse in Hungary
We respectfully report to the high nobility and the public at large of a new and richly arranged
Men's-Clothing-Warehouse
In Pest, in Szentér, in Wodianer's house, located opposite the Evangelist Church.

Since all our endeavors are directed towards serving our esteemed customers in the most reliable and accurate way with the finest English, French and domestic fabrics at the best possible prices, we offer the latest Hungarian and French ready-made men's, children's and travel clothes, and we can fulfil almost any order within 24 hours.

A notice in the newspaper, Surgony, on July 5, 1894 had noted the following:

26738. A. Weiner and M. Grünbaum, a public company based on a partnership agreement dated March 1, 1863 in Pest, co-members Adolf Weiner and Miksa Grünbaum, men's clothing merchants in Pest, 1 st.

Adolf Weiner, hailing from Arad, Hungary, emerged as a skilled "master tailor." Despite being relatively new to the trade, he managed to establish a successful business by the age of 23 in 1858. However, financial challenges led him to declare bankruptcy in April of that year. Surprisingly, this setback did not hinder his progress. Over the subsequent three years, by 1866, Adolf, in collaboration with Miksa Grünbaum, expanded their company in Pest to encompass three stores strategically located throughout the city. One store focused on wholesale operations, catering primarily to foreigners and provincial clients.

While Adolf and Miksa were involved, the company was hugely successful. At its peak, the business included five locations throughout Budapest, with one in Vienna. The company was a fashion house catering to gentlemen and boys, specializing in creative theatre costumes, in which they excelled. In later years, they would expand from civilian clothing into the highly lucrative market for military and custom uniforms.

The company owned the building at the corner of Hatvany street and Ország utca (later renamed Kossuth Lajos utca (street) and Károly körút (boulevard) in the heart of Budapest (the unification of Buda, Óbuda and Pest occurred in November 1873). It was in a highly visible location and underwent one major and several minor transformations. The property became so valuable that in 1911, a bank purchased the building for the highest price per square ever paid for land in Budapest.

The most expensive site. The most expensive land in the capital changed hands. This plot is located on the corner of Kossuth-Lajos utca and Károly-körút, where the Weiner and Grünbaum four-story apartment building rises. The plot is 94 6/10 square in total, and this plot, together with the house on it, is bought by the Bank of Hungary and the Commercial Company for one million one hundred and fifty thousand K[125]*, that is eleven thousand korona per square. —- A high price like this has not been paid for any land in Budapest.* (source: Nagykároly és Érmellek; April 15, 1911)

Adolf's personal life was also prospering. Regina Löwy was the eldest of Ignatz and Nina née Herzfeld's six children that included Lajos, Geza, Hugo, Irma (this author's great-grandmother), and Jacob. In March 1864, Master Tailor Adolf Weiner, almost 29, married Regina, not yet 18.

[125]*Approximately $7 million in 2025.*

Figure 155.
Weiner and Grunbaum store Déak ter 1. Corner store ground level 1880

Wir beehren uns einem hochverehrten Adel und P. T. Publ kum die höfliche Anzeige zu machen, daß wir ein neu elegantes, reich assortirtes

3·18 1—4

Herren-Mode-Kleider-Magazin

am Kohlplatz

im von Wodianer'schen Hause, vis-á-vis der evang. Kirche etablirten.

Indem unser allseitiges Streben dahin gerichtet ist, unsere hochverehrten Kunden auf's Solideste und Prompteste, mit den feinsten englischen, französischen und inländischen Stoffen zu den möglichst billigsten Preisen zu bedienen, erbitten wir uns einen zahlreichen Zuspruch, sowohl in gleich fertigen Herren-, Knaben- und Reisekleidern laut neuester ungarischen, wie auch französischen Façon, als in Bestellungen, die aller Art auch binnen 24 Stunden bestens ausgeführt werden.

Hochachtungsvoll

A. Weiner & M. Grünbaum.

Clipping 19.

Grünbaum and Weiner newspaper advertisement from August 17, 1864.

Pester Lloyd, August 17, 1864 (Clipping 18.)

We are pleased to respectfully inform the esteemed nobility and the public that we have opened a new, elegant, well-stocked Gentlemen's Fashion Clothing Store on Kohlplatz in the Modianer House, opposite the Evangelical Church.

As our constant aim is to serve our highly esteemed customers with custom-tailored and ready-made garments made from the finest English, French, and Indian fabrics at the most reasonable prices and with the fastest turnaround time, we respectfully request generous patronage.

We offer both finished gentlemen's, boys' and travel clothing in the latest styles and French fashion, as well as custom orders, which can be excellently completed within 24 hours.

Respectfully,
A. Weiner & M. Grünbaum

In March 1865, Regina gave birth to their first child, Carolina Melanie Weiner. The following year, their first son, Sandor, was born.

In the 19th century, the occurrence of losing a child at an early age was regrettably not uncommon, and the Weiner family was not exempt from such sorrow. The year 1866 brought a heartbreaking event when two-year-old Sandor succumbed to diphtheria in March.

In those early years, when their tailoring business was growing, newspaper articles praised the business because they had done so well within their first three years in operation. Some articles may have been paid advertisements or recommendations disguised as news. For example, the following article, published on December 7, 1866, in the Pester Sonntags Zeitung (Pest Sunday News), praised the company.

An old business with a new company... As we have just heard, Messrs. Grünbaum & Weiner have acquired the large clothing store of Ph. Morton in the old Theaterplatz in the German theater building (at the corner of Theatergasse) and will soon open it with the heading of "Tailor to the King of Hungary." How solid the firm Grünbaum & Weiner is, how reliable and competent their way of doing business, how good and elegant their articles of clothing are at a special price, is sufficiently proven by the fact that they have been put in the pleasant position by the countless customers from all classes of Hungary to be able to establish 3 say : three large elegant clothing stores in excellent locations in

Pest since the short period of their existence. The large store at the Kohlplatz is used by foreigners and merchants from the provinces with special preference, its second depot at the corner of Hatvanergasse and Landstrasse at "Hunyadi László" by the Haute-volée [high-flying] Hungarians, and we are convinced that their new store at the old Theaterplatz will be visited in no time by the tasteful gentlemen, and the tailcoats, trousers,

Figure 156. Grunbaum and Weiner at the corner of Hatvani ut. and Ország ut, 1894

Clipping 20. 1866 advertisement in the newspaper Pesti Naplo

slacks etc. of the company Grünbaum & Weiner will also be bought there with pleasure because of their elegance, selection of the best fabrics. It always pleases us when the striving and the solid commercial management of the patriotic industrialists is rewarded in such a way that a young company so quickly gained a good reputation and material benefits, and therefore we could not refrain from taking note of it.

Hugó was the next born in 1869, who will eventually inherit the business.

The next mention of the business wasn't until November 1868 when we see the three store locations: Deák ter, Hatvany ut, and "The old theater building, opposite the Magyar királyhoz (Hungarian King) hotel." They used a similar advertisement across local newspapers for many years, claiming to have the "Largest 3 menswear warehouses in Pest."

And finally, Adolf and Regina's last child, Arthur, was born in 1871. Arthur and Melanie (Carolina) will play important roles in the lives of their families, society, and the timber industry.

MENSWEAR EXPANSION

In June 1886, Weiner and Grunbaum's haberdashery business expanded from civilian clothing to military uniforms. The store at Vaci-utca 27 was exclusively military.

Full uniforms

and uniforms cs. kir. generals, tribal, chief and subordinate officers, one-year volunteers and crew, cs. kir. army, the m. kir. army and m. kir. gendarmerie, finance guard, and m. kir. for postal, railway and telegraph officers, forestry, firefighters and warlords, usually for all uniformed bodies, pandors and city Hajdú, delivering the most elegant and exquisite exhibition:
The austr. cs. kir. and m. kir. officer uniforms and military equipment institute

WEINER and GRÜNBAUM Austrian imperial royal, Hungarian royal and Portuguese royal tailors,

Budapest, IV., váczi utcza 27. sz.

Price lists on request for free and rented. - Orders are requested to indicate rank and degree. - Country orders are executed with cash on delivery.

Of the five locations in Budapest that opened over time, including Vaczi ut, 2, Kristof ter 8, Deák ter 1, Vaczi ut. 27, and Károly Korut 2, the most notable store was in the heart of Budapest on the corner of Kossuth Lajos utca and Károly Korut (Károly Korut 2). The administrative office was at Deák ter.

The business not only catered to theater costumes, menswear and boys-wear. As noted above, they developed significant sales in soldier's uniforms, specialty uniforms and outfits for various businesses, and military equipment such as camping supplies and other items such as military gear.

Figure 157.

Grünbaum and Weiner theater costumes and uniforms

In 2014, this Shako hat sold at auction for $2800.

Some advertisements called the business Grünbaum and Weiner, and some called it Weiner and Grünbaum. The name of their first store at Deák ter was Weiner és Grunbaum. The second store on Karoly krt. was "Grunbaum és Weiner." And Weiner és Grunbaum was the name of the third store that housed the military uniforms. It's unclear how they determined the naming convention for each store.

Costume Design

The business was well known for supplying costumes for theater actors and county bands, etc., and may have begun as a costume-making company. However, only a single newspaper article supports that claim.

"Weiner and Grünbaum were founded in 1862 on the corner of Deák Square. After the Compromise [1867 – JZ], the famous costume-making company also took on civilian clothes. In the 70s and 80s, it began to expand, opened several branch offices, and in 1910 employed 200 workers." [source: Folio Historica 2, F. Dozsa Katalin: A szabóipar Magyarországon a dualizmus korában – The tailoring industry in Hungary in the era of dualism [the dual monarchy of Austria-Hungary].

Military Uniforms and Specialty Outfits

Szabolcs Military Band

A szabolcsi banderium a fővárosban — *Belanszky-Demko Peter reprodukciója*

Figure 158.
Szabolcs Military Band

By April–May 1896 the organization of the two bands was well under way. Béla Liptai from the Budapest Gaston József Glasz saddle and strap maker borrowed 12 ornamental saddles for the gentleman's band, along with matching straps made of blue leather, yellow metal pieces, and copper shields and shackles. ***The clothes were made by Weiner and Grünbaum officer uniforms and military outfit companies in Budapest.*** *This outfit looked very much like the outfit of the county's 1790 (crown guard) band: light blue, rich gold-plated atilla, light blue trousers, gold-plated bodysuit, and white-gray hem with rich gold cords. The two-piece outfit was complemented by heel boots and feather ankle boots. The gentleman and the lady band wore the same dress, swords and hussar gown decorated with the county coat of arms. The same coat of arms was also applied to the saddle holders.*

To offer the perspective of its importance to the clothing and fashion industry, Weiner és Grünbaum was referenced in textile, military, and theatrical magazine articles through 2010, over eighty years after its closure!

The Family

On Nov 30, 1891, Hugo (22), married Stefania Grünbaum (17), the daughter of Adolf's partner, Miksa Grünbaum.

Hugó Weiner, a member of the company Weiner and Grünbaum, held the wedding on Sunday in the Doheny-ut Jewish temple with Miss Stefania Grünbaum, daughter of Miksa Grünbaum member of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Weiner Hugó, a Weiner és Grünbaum udvari szállitó cég beltagja, vasárnap tartotta meg a dohány-utcai izr. templomban esküvőjét *Grünbaum Stefánia* kisasszonynyal, Grünbaum Miksa kereskedelmi és iparkamarai tag leányával.

Sadly, Stefania died after only four years of marriage leaving behind Hugo and a two-year-old son, László. Hugo never remarried.

Kossuth Lajos and Károly krt Store - Demolition and Rebuild

In March 1887, a request was made to remodel the building at Károly Körút 2, where Adolf, Regina, and Melanie lived. For a time in 1879, this author's great-grandparents, Josef Zeisler and Irma Lőry Zeisler (Regina's sister), also resided in this building. According to ***Építő Ipar*** ("Building Industry"), a weekly publication, the owners sought to convert the property from a residential building into a commercial space ("a house for the use as a shop").

By 1894, as Budapest experienced rapid urban growth, the government initiated a major infrastructure project to widen the intersection of Kossuth Lajos utca and Károly Körút. This expansion was necessitated by the construction of the Erzsébet Bridge (Elizabeth Bridge) across the Danube, which connected directly to these streets. The project came at a significant cost to the city, as much of the medieval core of Pest, including Hatvani Street (now Kossuth Lajos utca), was demolished to accommodate the widening.

Among the casualties of this modernization effort was the building at 2 Kossuth Lajos Street, which housed the Grünbaum and Weiner clothing stores. The historic building was torn down between 1894 and 1895 to make way for redevelopment. Below is a photograph of the Grünbaum and Weiner store in 1894, just prior to the demolition and reconstruction.

Below, is a picture showing about two-thirds of the right side of the original building demolished and replaced by the taller building. In this way, the business could continue during construction. Once the company and tenants moved into the new structure, the old one was removed, and the street widened. The new structure is the current pink building that you can see in the photo in Figure 162. Several influential people lived in the building, most notably Theodore Hertzl, the celebrated spiritual father of The Jewish State.

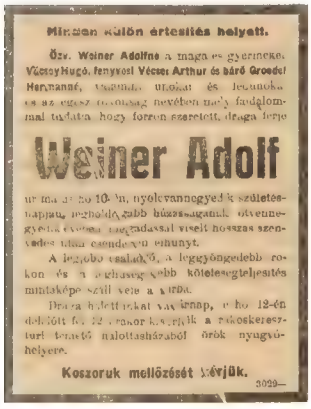
Figure 159.
Grünbaum and Weiner Building 1894 pre-demolition

A description of the building design: "The results of these experiences become clear from the Hauszmann designed Adam and Eberling business center (Váci utca 16, 1889) and the New York palace (1891-1895), as well as the Klotild palaces and Weiner and Grünbaum (Kossuth Lajos utca 2, 1894-1895): The buildings agree that their ground floor and half-floor for business purposes are open with large glass windows and that the other floors are rented apartments. In the latter two buildings, the lower two floors are almost entirely glass, the first floor has a balcony, and the apartments on the upper floors are very luxurious."

Figure 160.
Construction and demolition nearing completion.

Figure 161.
Further removal of the original building (Ország-Világ 1 Sept 1895)

Figure 162.
Shortly after construction was completed in 1911.



Mindenen külön értesítés helyett.

Özv. Weiner Adolfné a maga és gyermekei, Vécsey Hugó, fenyvesi Vécsei Arthur és báró Groedel Hermannné, unokái és dédunokái és az egész rokonság nevében mély fájdalommal tudatja, hogy forrón szeretett, drága jó

Weiner Adolf

ur f. é. május hó 10-én, nyolcvannegyedik születésnapján, legboldogabb házasságának ötvennegyedik évében, megadással viselt hosszas szenvedés után csendesen elhunyt.

A legjobb családfő, a leggyöngédebb rokon és a legkötelességteljesítés mintaképe szállt vele a sírba.

Drága hamvait vasárnap, e hó 12-én délután fél 1/2 órakor kísérjük a rákoskeresztúri temető halottasházából örök nyugvóhelyére.

Koszoruk mellőzését kérjük.

3029—

Clipping 21
Adolf Weiner's Death Notice
(Pesti Hirlap 12 May 1918)

In 1901, Arthur changed his surname to Vecsey/Vecsei from Weiner, while Hugó did the same in 1902. And in 1918, Adolf passed away.

May 12, 1918

In lieu of any special notice, the widow Mrs. Adolf Weiner, on behalf of herself and her children Hugó Vécsey, Arthur Vécsei fenyves and the wife of Baron Hermann Groedel [Baroness Melanie Weiner], as well as her grandchildren and great-grandchildren and the entire family, informs with deep sorrow that her dearly beloved, dear husband, Mr. Adolf Weiner, on the 10th of May, passed away quietly on his eighty-fourth birthday, in the fifty-fourth year of his happiest marriage, after a long period of suffering with surrender. The best head of the family, the gentlest relative, and the model of the most faithful devotion to duty, descends with him to the grave. On Sunday, the 12th of this month, at 12:30 in the afternoon, our dearly departed will be escorted from the mortuary of the Rákoskestúr cemetery to his eternal resting place.

HUGÓ WEINER VÉCSEI (1869-1920)

Hugó was born in Budapest in 1869, where he received his early education. He completed his studies at the Budapest Academy of Commerce during the 1884-1885 academic year. By 1891, he was fully immersed in his father's clothing business and became engaged to Stefania Grunbaum, the daughter of Miksa Grunbaum, his father's business partner. Hugo and Stefania were married on November 28, 1891.

"(Wedding.) At the Dohány Street Jewish synagogue, Hugó Weiner, a full partner in the Weiner and Grünbaum court supplier firm, led Miss Stefánia Grünbaum, daughter of Miksa Grünbaum, a member of the Chamber of Commerce, to the altar at noon on Sunday."

Sometime after their marriage, Hugó converted from Judaism to Roman Catholic, which is likely around the time that his wife and her family changed their family name from Grunbaum to Gara in an attempt to avoid antisemitism.

In 1893, Stefania gave birth to their only child, László, whose life is detailed in a later chapter. But tragically, on February 24, 1895, when László was just two years old, Stefania passed away from typhoid.

Magyar Hirlap
February 15, 1895

"Hugó Weiner, the young head of the well-known Weiner and Grünbaum firm, has been struck by a tragic loss. His wife, a barely 20-year-old vibrant and beautiful woman, a beloved figure in the city's social circles and the daughter of Miksa Grünbaum, a member of the city council, passed away suddenly after a brief illness. The young woman was an enthusiastic devotee of ice skating and caught a chill while on the ice. She succumbed to typhoid fever, which resulted from this illness. Her funeral will take place tomorrow, Friday, at 3 p.m. from the mourning house at 1 Kecskeméti Street."

A second article added:

"In the ranks of the mourning audience, we saw the presidents of the religious community Zsigmond Kohner and Sámuel Deutsch, Dr. Ignácz Goldzieher, Lajos Krausz from Megyer, Henrik Schossberger from Tornya, Imré Ullmann from Erényi, István Forgó, Pál Tenczer, and Zsigmond Breitner, committee members, chairman Gyula

Kohnel and the delegation of several charitable associations. The coffin, which was covered with flowers and wreaths, was taken to the Kerepes uti cemetery for eternal rest after a quiet ceremony.

Hugó was well-entrenched in the business and traveled internationally to acquire elegant fabrics and showcased other works as described in the following article from the Fővarosi Lapok on February 9, 1896:

Interesting attraction.

At the business premises of Weiner and Grünbaum, imperial and royal court suppliers, a highly interesting attraction has recently captivated the attention of the many distinguished gentlemen from both the court and public life who have visited. Mr. Hugó Weiner, a member of the firm, after an extended study trip abroad, has acquired numerous velvets, silks, brocades, and other fabrics, particularly from Venice and Lyon, for the production of ceremonial Hungarian attire. Additionally, several hundred figurines have been painted by prominent local artists for this purpose, which accurately depict the attire of the nobility and the people from the 14th century to the present day. The magnificence of the entire collection astonishes all visitors, and the favorable impression is further enhanced by the fact that a large quantity of these splendid ceremonial garments, prepared following orders, can already be seen in finished form.

Hugó had been running the business several years prior when his father, Adolf, on his 84th birthday, died in 1918. However, only two years later, on May 30, 1920, the following notice was published in the Az Ujsag newspaper:

"National Association of Master Tailors.

It is with deep pain that we announce the passing of our beloved president Mr. Hugó Vécsei who died after long suffering. He passed away, a great loss for the entire tailoring industry, of which he was an excellent leader for many years. Never sparing fatigue, he worked selflessly for the sake of hundreds of comrades. He was a whole person, a real man. His loss is almost irreplaceable for us. We will cherish his memory with grace that never fades.

The funeral will take place on Monday, February 31, at 4:00 p.m. in the Kerepesi-uti cemetery according to the rites of the Roman Catholic Church.

We asked our members to attend the funeral as many as possible."

A second obituary...

"László Vécsey, as the son of the deceased, on behalf of himself as well as his undersigned siblings and relatives, announces with a heavy heart that their beloved father and relative, Hugó Vécsey, passed away on the 29th of this month at 1 p.m., at the age of 51, after a long period of suffering. His funeral will take place on the 31st of this month at 4 p.m. from the mortuary of the Kerepesi cemetery, following the rites of the Roman Catholic Church, and he will be laid to eternal rest in the cemetery there. The Holy Mass will be offered on June 1st at 10 a.m. in the Terézváros parish church in honor of the Almighty. Blessings and peace upon his ashes! His siblings, Baroness Melanie Groedel and Arthur Vécsey."

Figure 163.
László Weiner Vécsey,
ITS Photo 1948

LÁSZLÓ WEINER VÉCSEY (1893-1960)

(born László Weiner)

László Vécsey was many things—a war hero, POW, friend, businessman, journalist, husband, and father. Once arrested for shooting a man in a Budapest park, he later endured imprisonment by both the Germans and the Russians for his outspoken opposition to Nazism and Communism. These struggles cost him nearly everything—his marriage, his child, his business, and almost his life.

Born in Budapest in 1893, László was an only child. His father, Hugó Weiner, had married Stefania Grünbaum, the daughter of his father's business partner, two years earlier. That same year, Budapest celebrated a milestone with the electrification of the city. Amid this era of progress, László entered the world, and his parents affectionately called him "Laci" (pronounced "Lah-tzy"). From 1902 to 1906, he attended the prestigious Evangélikus Gimnázium in Budapest, where he began to develop his intellect and character.

Tragedy struck when László was only four years old. His mother, Stefania, succumbed to typhoid, leaving the young boy to be raised by a close-knit family intent on providing him with emotional and financial stability. Support came from both sets of grandparents—Regina and Adolf Weiner, and Miksa and Jenni Grünbaum—as well as his wealthy aunt, Melanie Groedel. Together, they ensured László was surrounded by love and the means to thrive, bolstered by the success of the Weiner and Grünbaum haberdashery business.

When László was nine, his father changed the family name to Vécsey (VEE-cha-ee), a step that reflected the challenges of the time, to both assimilate into Hungarian society and to avoid or minimize the prevailing burden of anti-Semitism.

In 1911, at the age of eighteen, László enrolled in the mechanical engineering program at the Berlin University of Charlottenburg. His time there, however, was short-lived; he left the program in July 1912. During his studies, he caught the attention of the Austrian military, and soon after leaving university, he joined the Austro-Hungarian army as a reserve officer. His military career would lead him to the Italian front during World War I, though records of his specific unit's activities remain elusive.

Rising to the rank of senior lieutenant (Oberlutnant), László served 4 1/2 years in the mounted field artillery regiment, primarily with the10th and 31st Field Cannon Regiment - FKR. When WWI broke out, he was stationed in Vienna, but was later transferred to the Italian front, where he earned five medals for merit and bravery in battle. Captured during combat, he endured the harsh realities of being a prisoner of war before being released on January 2, 1917, as part of a prisoner exchange.

Edward Alexander Powell, an American journalist covering the war, wrote in his *1917 book 'Italy in the War and the Allies in the West":*

"We met convoys of Austrian prisoners, guarded by cavalry or territorials, on their way to the rear. They looked tired and dirty and depressed, but most prisoners look that. A man who has spent days or even weeks amid the mud and blood of a trench, with no opportunity to bathe or even to wash his hands and face, with none too much food, with many of his comrades dead or wounded, with a shell storm shrieking and howling about him, and has then had to surrender, could hardly be expected to appear high spirited and optimistic."

Towards the end of the war, in October 1918, László finally returned home. According to a letter from his doctor, Oberlutnant Vécsey, while still in the service, had incurred a series of illnesses, including a nervous breakdown, ear infection, fever, stomach irritation, and bowel disease. One could assume he was gassed in the trenches experiencing much or all of what Eduard Alexander Powell saw in those convoys of tired and dirty prisoners. László survived but soon learned that his grandfather, Adolf Weiner, had passed away while he was serving his country.

Medals won by László

- Bronze medal of merit on ribbon of the Military Merit Cross w/crossed swords (1916)
- Silver medal of merit on ribbon of the Military Merit Cross w/crossed swords (1917)
- Military Merit Cross 3rd class (1918) w/swords: It was awarded to officers who had performed especially praiseworthy service before the enemy in wartime, or outstanding service in peacetime. Swords were authorized for awards for bravery (see picture below).
- War Decoration w/crossed swords

Figure 164.
Military Merit Cross 3rd class

- Karl Troop Cross: The Karl Troop Cross (German: Karl-Truppenkreuz) was instituted on 13 December 1916 by Emperor Karl I of Austria-Hungary. The cross was awarded until the end of the First World War to soldiers of the Austro-Hungarian Army, regardless of rank, who had been with a combatant unit for at least twelve weeks and who had actually served at the front.

Shortly after the war, during the "Red Terror" in Hungary (March - August 1919), László became involved with Hungarian anti-communist counter-revolutionaries. In March 1919, the Communist Bela Kun set up a Soviet Republic in Hungary and rapidly implemented a radical Bolshevik-style political program. Much of the economy was nationalized, the church disestablished, revolutionary tribunals set up to administer 'justice', and radical land reform imposed. As Kun's popularity waned, he announced in June 1919 a Lenin-style "dictatorship of the proletariat" and began a "red terror" in which hundreds of counter-revolutionaries were eliminated. On June 13, László was arrested and imprisoned for anti-communist and counter-revolutionary activities.

Tibor Szamuely wrote in the pages of the Vörös Újság (Red News):

"Everywhere counter-revolutionaries run about and swagger; beat them down! Beat their heads where you find them! If counter-revolutionaries were to gain the upper hand for even a single hour, there will be no mercy on any proletarian. Before they stifle the revolution, suffocate them in their own blood!"

With their support, József Cserny organized a group of about 200 known as "The Lenin Boys," whose intention was to uncover "counter-revolutionary" activities in the Hungarian countryside, with similar groups operating within Budapest.

László's father, Hugó, must have been horrified when he heard that the communists had arrested his son. The tribunal was summarily executing many anti-communists in custody and was administering trials with no appeals. Eventually, the tribunal eliminated about 590 counter-revolutionaries. Fearing for his son's life, Hugó wrote a letter to the tribunal requesting László's release from prison on humanitarian grounds. A letter from László's doctor attested to his physical and mental illness from his time in the war. By then, Hugó had developed terminal cancer but indicated he would care for László at home.

Dear Revolutionary Tribunal!

With respect, my son Vécsei Lásló has been detained for 9 days because he allegedly was involved in an agitation.

I am convinced that my son has never behaved in such a reckless manner, and his behavior and statements in front of the court indicate the opposite. But I must also state with a heavy heart that although my son's calm mind and firm character preclude any such crime, if he had made a statement that could be misunderstood, it was only because of his unfortunate ill health and not because of my son's willingness to violently defy order and established social rules.

My son had been on the battlefield for 4 1/2 years, and in the trenches with frequent adversity, during which time his mental condition had been, so to speak, completely destroyed, his nervous system destroyed, his physical condition completely weakened, and his heart and nerves forever incapable of the greater work he had been called upon to do.

According to the attached medical certificate, in October 1918, he suffered a nervous shock, which affected not only his nervous system but also his brain, and it was only in this way that he could have been caught up in a moment of thoughtlessness and made a statement under external influences. He has fought and worked for his fellow human beings with all the strength of his life and now, in the name of justice, I appeal to the Court on behalf of my only son, who has been ill all his life and is worthy of his merits.

Please consider urgently determining my son's health condition and ordering his release so that he can receive care and support me, who is sick myself, at work.

Shortly after Hugó delivered his letter, László was released. A few months later, in May 1920, Hugó passed away, leaving László in charge of the family's menswear business, Weiner and Grünbaum, which had been founded by his grandfather.

László officially took over the company in November 1920, having previously served as an "associate member" before his father's death. He managed the business until 1928. However, in 1925, Weiner and Grünbaum filed for bankruptcy due to several factors. The post-war economy was in decline, and the company suffered significant financial losses after demand for military uniforms plummeted following the end of World War I in 1918. The most critical

blow, however, came from a customs dispute that immobilized a large portion of the company's inventory for 18 months. This warehouse impoundment stemmed from allegations that László had illegally imported £27 worth of perfume samples from England.

The incident unfolded after the perfume samples arrived in Vienna and were transported to Budapest. Shortly thereafter, an anonymous complaint accused László of customs offenses and smuggling. As part of the investigation, customs authorities sealed the company's warehouse, preventing access to or sale of significant inventory. The warehouse lockout proved disastrous, costing the company an estimated 100 million korona. Unfortunately, currency transition in 1925 from korona to pengő and runaway inflation in Hungary make it difficult to calculate a dollar equivalent. Fortunately, the investigation concluded without charges, but the financial damage was done.

During the bankruptcy proceedings, additional accusations arose suggesting that László had been misusing company funds to support a lavish lifestyle, including expenditures on expensive dogs and an active social life. However, no substantial evidence emerged from these claims, and they were ultimately dismissed.

Despite the company's bankruptcy, Weiner and Grünbaum appears to have continued operations under new ownership for several years. By downsizing its stores, the business remained active at least through 1929 and possibly as late as 1932.

The Count Viglia Affaire

In the early hours of Thursday, May 25, 1922, just outside an upscale restaurant in Budapest's City Park, László drew his gun and shot Count Henrik Viglia.

László was well known in Budapest's vibrant nightlife, frequently seen enjoying the city's evening entertainments and popular nightclubs. On this particular Thursday morning, tensions escalated into violence between László and Count Viglia, a prominent figure in society renowned for his skill in ballroom dancing—often described as a "parquet dancer."

Earlier that night, László and three companions had been dining at the elegant Capital Pavilion restaurant, situated near Heroes' Square (Hősök tere) in Városliget, close to the historic Vajdahunyad Castle, originally built for Hungary's Millennial Exhibition of 1896. Count Viglia, accompanied by his entourage, was

seated a few tables away. Throughout the evening, the Count continually directed unsettling glances toward one of László's companions, Miklos Lazics.

As the evening progressed, Viglia sent a note to Lazics requesting a private conversation, as they shared a mutual acquaintance. However, the language used by Viglia was so offensive that Lazics returned the note unanswered, provoking Viglia's anger. Soon afterward, Viglia dispatched two black jazz musicians to László's table with a challenge for Lazics, demanding a duel to settle a perceived past insult. Further inflaming the situation, Viglia suggested the musicians serve as Lazics' duel assistants—a proposal Lazics interpreted as a deliberate affront. Rejecting the challenge as absurd, Lazics dismissed the musicians without response.

Although this concluded the confrontation inside the restaurant, the matter was far from settled.

Count Viglia had a somewhat scandalous reputation. He had recently been seen performing in Vienna as part of a popular ballroom dancing duo alongside Kitty Bavin, who was widely rumored to be his lover. Although publicly introduced as his wife, Bavin was actually just his dance partner.

The couple had gained notoriety for their performances of trendy dances such as the shimmy and tango. Count Viglia, a young and stylish man, often introduced himself as Marquis Viglia, adopting an aristocratic French persona and claiming origins from the South of France. The press frequently referred to him as French nobility, though the accuracy of these claims was questionable at best.

Advertisements in Budapest and Romania for Viglia and Bavin from 1922 & 1923

From May onward, Viglia became a fixture in Budapest's nightlife, frequently attending clubs and showcasing his dancing talents to women. Despite his charm, he was not universally liked. It came to his attention that Miklos Lazics had made unfavorable remarks about him prior to his arrival in the city. Determined to confront Lazics about these allegations, tensions steadily rose.

At around 2:00 am, closing time at the Capital Pavilion, both groups left the restaurant in an intoxicated state. Viglia, who served as an official at the French mission in Budapest, was accompanied by three colleagues from the mission and two women. As both groups emerged outside, the two jazz musicians again tried to prevent László and his friends from leaving.

May 8, 1923

December 25, 1922

Suddenly, a fight erupted. Viglia aggressively approached Lazics, punching him twice in the face. László rushed forward to help his friend and attempted to calm the situation. Instead, Viglia shouted, "I'll get revenge!" and began attacking László. Stepping back to gain distance, László drew his gun and shouted: "Calm down!" However, Viglia, enraged and intoxicated, ignored this caution and lunged at him once more. In response, László fired.

The first bullet hit Viglia's palm, grazed his chest, and lodged itself in his upper right arm. As Viglia struggled to grab the weapon, a second shot was accidentally fired but fortunately missed. Severely injured but not fatally wounded, Viglia was rushed to a nearby hospital for treatment and questioning. László and the remaining witnesses were taken to police headquarters for interrogation. After two days in custody and extensive questioning, authorities determined László had acted in clear self-defense and released him without charges.

Viglia remained hospitalized for about three weeks. It later emerged that the incident stemmed from Viglia falsely claiming Lazics had insulted his wife during a dance months earlier. In truth, the woman in question was not his wife, but Kitty Bavin, his dance partner and likely lover. Jealous and correctly suspicious that Lazics had been courting Kitty in his absence, Viglia perceived this as a personal affront, leading to the violent confrontation.

Figure 165. Map of Budapest's City Park (Városliget)

Figure 166.
City Park (Városliget)
Capital Pavilion Restaurant 1920

Figure 167.
Capital Pavilion Restaurant

Sidenote: While researching this story, I requested translation assistance and posted an article on JewishGen.org, from which I received several replies. A few weeks later, after having written the story, I unexpectedly but elatedly received an email from Dany Yazbeck from Bettlach, Switzerland, after he had seen my posting on JewishGen. Dany is Viglia's grandson. He sent me the following pictures, including clarification and background on his grandfather.

Figure 168.
Henry Viglia and Kitty Bevin

Count Viglia was Marquis Enrico Viglia, born in Rome in 1891. According to his grandson, *"he was definitely a womanizer."* However, Viglia ended up marrying Dany's grandmother, *"who was Jewish... and a scholar with four degrees who was not a cabaret dancer."* Viglia was an anti-fascist, and after attempting to help a Jewish friend, he was captured by the fascists who gave him over to the Nazis and was sent to the Mauthausen concentration camp. He survived by passing himself

off as a doctor as he had studied medicine previously, and many in his family were doctors. After his release from Mauthausen, he went to his property in Franca Villa Fontana. He never fully recovered from his time in the concentration camp and died of stomach cancer four years later.

———

After 1929 and throughout the interwar period, László worked as a journalist for various Western newspapers, although, unfortunately, none of his articles or bylines have surfaced in available archives. In August 1939, Hungarian newspapers reported that László had become "the head of the fourth English-language newspaper in Central Europe," highlighting his prominence in journalism despite limited archival evidence.

In January 1932, László was briefly mentioned in connection with a slander lawsuit filed against him by two immigrant Russian brothers, Tivadar and Sandor Fechner. The Fechner brothers accused László of publishing a defamatory article about them. However, additional reports later revealed the brothers had initiated twenty-four press-related slander lawsuits within three years. Ultimately, both were deported after the courts received further evidence about their backgrounds, thus resolving these and other legal disputes. The specific article that prompted their lawsuit against László has yet to be located.

During the early stages of World War II, László continued his career in journalism. However, due to his Jewish heritage and his strong anti-Nazi and anti-communist positions, journalism became increasingly perilous. Consequently, he opened a stationery store in Budapest under his wife's name, as his Jewish identity prevented him from obtaining official approval. Unfortunately, this strategy did not entirely shield him from Nazi persecution.

In April 1944, while operating his stationery business, László became involved with Dezső Sulyok, leader of an anti-Nazi organization and former Hungarian parliament member. Both were arrested for their anti-Nazi activities. László was imprisoned in a camp at Jaszapati, approximately 100 miles east of Budapest, referred to derogatorily by Nazis as a "Parasitenkompanie" or "parasite camp." This camp primarily held Jews, Roma, and political prisoners. Dezső Sulyok was released after two months from a similar camp in Nagykanizsa, while László remained imprisoned until October, enduring a total of six months in captivity before returning home.

The region around Jaszbereny served as the headquarters for Labor Battalion I during World War II, dispatching numerous labor service companies, composed largely of Jews, to Ukraine and the copper mines of Bor, Serbia. In spring 1944, a ghetto was established in Jaszbereny for Jews from the area, including nearby towns like Jaszapati. Later, those held were moved to an internment camp in Monor, southeast of Budapest, before being deported to Auschwitz. As a political prisoner and due to his earlier conversion from Judaism, László narrowly escaped the worst outcomes, even though Nazi doctrine still classified him as Jewish.

After WWII, László became a refugee eager to escape from Hungary and communism due to his work for western newspapers. He turned to the International Tracing Service (ITS) in Vienna for assistance, which provided relocation services to refugees, victims, and displaced persons persecuted and oppressed by the Nazis and communists. The Red Cross and Allied forces organized the enormous task of tracing these people and attempted to reunite them with relatives. Baron Richard Groedel and his cousin, László Vecsey, were among them.

Request for Refugee Assistance

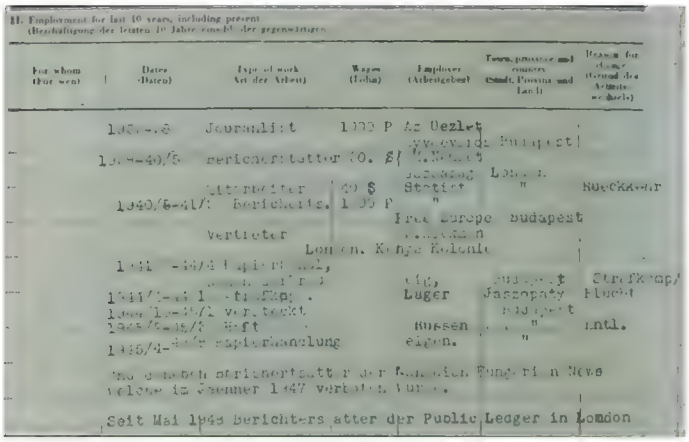
Each person requesting assistance was required to provide a photo and brief personal history to support their request for help in relocating or gaining citizenship in another country. Here is László's story he provided to the ITS translated from the original German:

"Before 1914 I was a professional officer of the Austro-Hungarian army of the Monarchy. I was stationed in Vienna. After 1919 I took my leave, took part in the Hungarian communist counter-revolution, and was arrested and imprisoned by the communists. After the liberation I inherited a fashion and textile shop in Budapest which I ran until 1928, when I turned to the journalist profession specializing in economic affairs.

At first, I worked as a journalist in Budapest for 10 years, then in London I worked at Magyar Nemzet (Hungarian Nation), Az Ellenor (The Inspector), Gaszdasagy Elet (Economic Life), and later as a reporter for the Statist[2] for South-Eastern Europe. Then in 1940, I returned to Hungary and remained as a reporter for the Statist until the end of the war. I was also a representative of the Hickmann company, London, for the Kenya Colony. Then later I ran a paper business under my wife's name because, as a Jew, I would not have had permission to do so. In 1944/5 I was put into

the so-called Parasite Company. I remained there until October 1944, when I escaped and remained hidden until the Russians invaded. After the invasion I was suspected of collaborating with the Secret Service and was arrested by the Russians, but was released after 2 months in prison. After my release I opened a paper shop again, and I was also a reporter for the Canadian Hungarian News, which was banned in 1947. Since October 1947 I was no longer involved in my business, but was employed as a Senior Official of the Export Cooperative of the retail traders.

The reasons for my escape were fear of persecution, since I worked for western newspapers, and also because of my imprisonment in 1919 by the communists. I was also in very close contact with the leader of the opposition party Szuyok." [Dezső Szuyok -JZ].



Seit Mai 1945 Berichterstatter der Public Ledger in London

Clipping 22
International Tracing Service card

Marriage records in Hungary are not publicly available from that period due to privacy laws. Nevertheless, a newspaper announcement in the Ujság, dated July 26, 1936, noted that László had married Piroska Ilona Roza Kelemery in Budapest. Two years later, from 1938-1940, they were living in London, where László worked as a representative for W. Hickmann, possibly a contractor for the British government for the Protectorate of Kenya, which had been annexed by the British in 1920. As WWII began to heat up, László and Piroska returned to Budapest.

In February 1940, Piroska started a wholesale textile business.

Piroska's textile business announcement (1940)

Budapest kir. tvszk 1940. X. 4. Cg 42218/3. 40305/1. - Company name: Lászlóné Vécsey born Ilona Rózsa Piroska Keleméri is a small wholesaler of all kinds of textiles, cloths, fabrics and linings, silk, semi-silk and rayon and their substitutes, a resident of Budapest (VI., Székely Bertalan-utca 2 / c). - The company owner registers the company by writing the company text by hand. - Location: Budapest, V. ker., Mérleg-utca 10. sz. (4146.) (Volume LVII, p. 41) (1940-47.) *["né" after the family name means "wife of" -JZ]*

The paper Kozponti Ertesito (Central Bulletin) published announcements of new business startups. Contrary to the date of February 1941 that László gave to the ITS as the start of his stationary business called "Standard Papir," it began

exactly one year later in February 1942 and was created under his wife's name.

The stationary business is listed in the 1943 Budapest business directories as *"Standard paper és irószerkereskedelmi vallalat. Vécsey Lászlóné, VII. Dob-ut 68. 423-965"*

Standard paper and stationary trading company, László Vecsey's wife, address, phone #.

Business announcement during the war (1942)

Budapest kir. tvszk 1942. VIII. 24. Cg 43182/4. 42641/1. - Company name: László Dénesné Vécsey born Ilona Rózsa Piroska Keleméri, a resident of Budapest (VII., Dob-u. 68.), who trades in paper and writing and drawing materials, as well as direct resellers as direct consumers. - The company owner registers the company by signing the name of Lászlóné Vécsey under the prescribed, pre-printed or printed company text. - Shop: VII., Dob-u. No. 68. (3864.) (E. LXIII., P. 51) (1942–43.)

As previously mentioned, László was arrested in April 1944 and imprisoned in Jaszapati, Hungary. Following his release in October, he remained in hiding through January 1945, as noted in his ITS interview. Shortly thereafter, in March or April 1945, Piroska gave birth to a son named Rikard. Soon afterward, Soviet forces arrived in Budapest.

In February 1945, László was again arrested, this time by the Russians, due to his anti-communist activities. His imprisonment occurred around the time of Rikard's birth, leaving Piroska—already nine months pregnant—alone and in an extremely difficult and stressful situation. Understandably, this turmoil strained their marriage significantly, and shortly after László's release, their marriage ended.

After László returned, Piroska, now with a newborn son, quickly married Richard Faltusz, whom she likely met during László's frequent absences. Given the timing, it's probable that László was Rikard's biological father, as the boy was born just over nine months following László's release from Jaszapati. Tragically, Rikard died at just three months old at his stepfather's home. On his death record, Rikard carried the family name Vécsey, confirming he was László's son

In 1957 in Vienna, László met with his first cousin, Irén Groedel Svab.

Figure 169.
László and Irén 1957

László died on October 24, 1960 and is buried in the family tomb in Vienna at Friedhof Wiener Zentral - Family Crypt 14B.

Figure 170.

Arthur Weiner/Vécsey von fenyvesi (1871-1944)

ARTHUR WEINER VÉCSEY VON FENYVESI (1871-1944)

CEO of the Transylvanian Forestry Company

Photo ca. 1905

Arthur, the youngest of four children and Melanie's younger brother, was born in Budapest on May 21, 1871. While his father, Adolf Weiner, brother Hugo, and his nephew, Laszlo, worked in the family clothing business, Weiner és Grunbaum, Arthur took a different path. By the age of 20, he had become a director for the ***Transylvanian Forest Industry Company***, managed by his brother-in-law, Baron Hermann Groedel.

In December 1898, at the age of 27, Arthur founded and served as the Editor-in-Chief of a new trade magazine called *"Faugyi Szemle"* (Wood Review), along with its German-language counterpart, *"Holzrevue."* This magazine catered to the interests of the forestry trade. An article announcing the magazine's launch highlighted the support it received, including a commendation from Royal Prince (Archduke) Joseph August, an expert in Hungarian forests. He believed that this new publication would bring prosperity to Hungary and benefit the struggling farmers affected by the elements. The magazine not only covered Hungary's forestry and wood industry but also provided extensive and intriguing information about international ports and markets. Additionally, its German version, *"Holzrevue,"* aimed to introduce foreign professionals to Hungarian industry conditions for those who did not understand the Hungarian language.

A second, brief article announcing the new magazine is as follows:

"Wood Review. Under this somewhat peculiar title, a decent trade magazine was launched today, serving the interests of forestry and timber production. It is owned by Artur Weiner and edited by Jenő Pollacsek. The first issue is immediately very rich and interesting. The introductory article was written by Archduke József, followed by Albert Bedő, Chief Forest Counselor Horváth, Baron Artúr Feilitzsch, Baron Gábor Dániel and a whole host of other excellent experts. The small announcements of the new page are also gorgeous. The Wood Review is published twice a month (it also has a separate German edition) and its subscription price is HUF 8 for the whole year."

Additionally, the newspaper Magyar Polar on December 16, 1898, notes:

"A new magazine on forestry, production and timber trade was launched in the capital under the title of Timber Review. With the help of excellent authorities. His first article is from the pen of Archduke Joseph, who greets the new page in warm words. Albert Bedő, former Secretary of State for Agriculture, Dániel Gábor representative, Lippert min. Adviser, Sándor Horváth, Chief Forest Adviser, Arthur Feilitzsch, Forest Director, and several domestic and foreign authorities enrich the content of the first issue. Subscription price for the whole year is 8 frt."

The magazine lasted two years until 1900 when it merged with another timber magazine. Along with being managing editor of the magazine, Pollacsek was involved with many aspects of the Groedel timber business, including heading the steamship business in London and as head of the *Transylvania Forestry Industry Company's* commercial business. After about three years, he lacked time to manage the magazine and stepped down. At the time of this writing, no surviving editions were found.

In January, 1901, Arthur changed his surname to Vécsei (VECH-ah-ee) from Weiner. It was published on January 12 and approved by the minister of the interior.

Later that same year, Arthur considered running for a political position. According to the May 30, 1901 edition of the Pesti Naplo:

"About Kovászná. Write to our newspaper: In the district, where a part of the liberal party only voted for the representative of József Sándor and re-nominated him for the next term, the name of a new candidate is also mentioned. Namely, Artur Vécsei, the central director of the Transylvanian Forest Industry Company, will also perform, even with a liberal program. Vécsei has a prestigious party in the district."

In the newspaper Magyarország, on September 28, 1901:

"In the Orba district (Háromszék), a part of the Liberal Party against József Sándor, which no longer wants to know about its former representative, promoted Károly Enytdi. Geréb's lawyer and Artur Vécsei are also preparing to perform; the latter, when he steps up, his choice is certain.

There are no further articles about Artur's run for office.

On December 27, 1901, the Pesti Naplo announced the engagement of Arthur Vecsei to Miss Jenny Stein of Vienna. And on March 11, 1902, in Vienna, they married.

Arthur's dedication to Hermann's timber business and the timber industry at large was notable and noticed. At the age of 34, in 1905, Arthur's efforts in commerce earned him a title of nobility (von fenyvesi: *of the pines*), and on June 22, 1907, Arthur was elected president of the *National Association of Timber Producers and Timber Dealers.*[126]

In 1903, Arthur and Jenny had a son, Pál. However, after twelve years of marriage, on February 27, 1914 in Vienna, Jenny, 39, died of an undisclosed illness. Arthur never remarried.

Arthur's resignation from the board of the Transylvanian Forest Industry Co. occurred on September 10, 1914. The reasons for his departure from the board were not revealed.

[Business news. At Erdélyi erdöipar rt., Artur Vécsei is a member of the board of directors, and the termination of his capacity and right to subscribe to this document has been registered. Source: Magyar Fakereskedo]

Director and Owner of Lipótváros Casino

The casino of Lipótváros, which was a social club, functioned between 1896 and 1944, and was an important part of Hungarian Jewish heritage. It was one of the most prestigious casinos of Budapest, with the specificity that its members were mostly Jewish. Other casinos that catered to the upper classes flirted with accepting Jews at times, but never to any significant degree, if at all. Unfortunately, the specific years of Arthur's ownership is elusive.

Lipótváros casino was influential in the literary, political, and intellectual life of the city, and gave social dimension to Lipótváros. The building is today known as the Danube Mansion. The institution of the casino supported the creation of the political parties and provided a kind of debating platform for the politicians and members of the parties, which had never existed before. In many cases, the casinos were not only the places of political debates, but economic ones as

[126]*Source: Az Ujsag, June 29,1907*

well, deals and business were conducted there. Two other important functions which the casinos served as well were the nurturing of the cultural life and charity. They held literary events, supported rising poets and writers, organized theatrical and musical performances. Both the detailed façade, the special architectural solutions and the ornamented and fairly decorated interior design, which made the Casino really look like a mansion, aimed to emphasize the social importance of the members. It soon became a prominent and influential establishment with important and well-known members and significant cultural programs. Famous Hungarian writers, poets and thinkers of the time visited the mansion, but many artists from abroad accepted the invitation of the Kaszinó as well, such as the famous American writer, Mark Twain and the Czech composer, Antonín Dvořák. The Casino of Lipótváros was an important institution, its presence in the context of the given time and political situation has a special meaning. (Source: The hidden Jewish Heritage of Lipótváros)

In June, 1915, Arthur was elected as a deputy commissioner of the Hungarian Red Cross.

After the 1915 article mentioned above, I have been unable to locate any additional information about Arthur until his death in 1944 in Máramarossziget. He is buried next to his sister, Baroness Melanie Weiner Groedel.

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From an email from Kathy Lonyay dated 10/20/03

"By the way, the patent of nobility also included a differentiating name of Fenyvesi. This was used to tell the several noble Vécsey families apart. The full name would be thus: Fenyvesi Vécsey Arthur. (Fenyvesi actually means "from Fenyves" or "of the pine wood (meaning forest)."

Arthur is awarded nobility

Magyar Szalon 1905

According to the report of last Saturday's issue of the official newspaper, the king honored Arthur Vécsey, CEO of the Transylvanian Forest Industry Joint Stock Company, with Hungarian nobility and the title of "Fenyvesi" in recognition of his merits in the field of commerce. Arthur Vécsey is a well-respected member of today's gentlemen's society and the high-class commercial world of the capital, both for his

Magyar kolónia Skole-Groedlovban, Lengyelországban
Kubinyi Ella, Vécsey Artur, Kovács Stefi, Merk Mária és Roboz Géza
(Patraszewski felv.)

Figure 171.
Hungarian community in Skole-Groedlov, Poland
Arthur Vécsey and Géza Roboz
Szinhazi Elet (Theater Life), April 6, 1930

great talent and knowledge, and for his engaging manner.

Vécsey was born in 1872, so the royal award went to a young, 34-year-old man, which was rare in Hungary. However, he earned the award with ten years of unremitting work, which he performed as a director of the Transylvanian Forest Industry Joint Stock Company.

Through the management of this large-scale, so-called worldwide company, he rendered a great service to our domestic industry and trade.

For years, he also edited a wood industry magazine and is generally an enthusiastic supporter of literature and art, and there is no humane movement that he does not support with a good heart and a generous hand.

Budapesti Hirlap, March 3, 1914

(Mourning column.) Jenny Stein, the wife of CEO Artur Vécsey von Fenyvesi, owner of the Lipótváros Casino, died on Friday in Vienna. The deceased was cremated in the family's mansion on Althanplatz, where it was consecrated on Sunday, and then, according to her last will, she was taken to Dresden, where the body was buried today.

Fenyvesi *Vécsey* Arturné, született *Stein* Jenny, Vécsey Artur vezérigazgatónak, a Lipótvárosi Kaszinó gazdájának a felesége pénteken meghalt Bécsben. Az elhunytat a családnak az Althanplatzon lévő palotájában ravatalozták föl, a hol vasárnap szentelték be, majd utolsó akaratához képest Drezdába vitték, a hol a holttestet ma elhamvasztották.

Kárpáti Hiradó, February 20, 1944

Arthur Vécsey von Fenyves unexpectedly passed away in Máramarossziget. He was previously the director of the Transylvanian Forestry Industry Co. and later of the Groedel Brothers' estate in Skole. The deceased, who was the younger brother of the late Baroness Hermann Groedel, remained in Skole even after

the Russian invasion, believing he would come to no harm due to his paternal treatment of the estate's employees and workers.

However, the Bolsheviks did not respect Vécsey's social work and treated him with the utmost brutality. He was subjected to constant persecution and was imprisoned several times. When Hungarian and German troops drove the Bolsheviks out of Skole, Arthur Vécsey welcomed the arriving forces. The borders, previously tightly closed by the Bolsheviks, were opened for him, allowing him to return to Hungary. Since then, he had been living in Máramarossziget.

The hardships he endured under Russian rule took a toll on his heart, leading to his death at the age of 73. In his will, he requested that his heart be pierced upon his death, a wish that was fulfilled. His body was laid to eternal rest in the Roman Catholic cemetery beside his sister, the late Baroness Hermann Groedel, following a Reformed Church service. Vécsey was a widely respected gentleman, and his unexpected death evoked deep sympathy across society.

LÖWY/LŐRY FAMILY

IMRE FERENC LŐRY (1887-1967):

Imre Ferenc Lőry, the second child and first son of Géza and Cecilia Lőry, was born on July 26, 1887, in Budapest. From 1908 to 1920, he worked for his cousin's husband, Hermann Groedel, at the *Transylvanian Forest Industry Corporation*, serving as a clerk, official, and correspondent.

In 1922, Imre shifted his focus to agriculture, establishing himself as one of the largest fruit distributors in the Budapest region. His leadership extended to the development of the Buda Hills area of Budapest, where he purchased land and played a pivotal role in persuading the government to build essential infrastructure, including roads and water systems.

Imre married Borbála Fritz in June 1926, though the marriage produced no children. After eight years together, they divorced in 1934. However, a notice in a 1967 newspaper implied that he may have remarried.

Beyond agriculture, Imre diversified his interests in business and real estate. In 1920, he joined the supervisory board of *Mobil International Shipping Co.*, and by 1921, he became a director of Nostra, a company he left in 1923. In December 1922, he co-founded the commercial cooperative "Futura," focusing on trade between Hungary and Germany, where he served as a director.

Starting in 1923, Imre began acquiring land in the Buda Hills, particularly in the Csatárka (CHA-tar-ka) area. He continued purchasing properties throughout the 1920s, becoming a key figure in the region's development. At the time, the area was noted as one of the most beautiful and healthiest parts of the capital but lacked basic infrastructure such as roads, water, and electricity. Imre tirelessly lobbied the government to provide these essentials, transforming the Buda Hills into a more accessible and livable area.

Imre's contributions to agriculture, business, and urban development left a lasting impact on the Budapest region, particularly in the Buda Hills, which became a desirable part of the city under his influence.

For several years from the mid 1930s through most of the 1940s, Imre owned Guggerhegy [Gugger Hills] Kioszk, a former nightclub turned restaurant in

the Buda Hills. Although the facility survived the war, by 1948, he had sold the property. In the late 1950s, Guggerhegy Kioszk burned to the ground and was never rebuilt.

A July 5, 1936 article in the Budapesti Hirlap describes Guggerhegy Kiosk as follows:

Gugger Hill is one of those excursion spots that more than half of Budapest's residents don't even know about. In fact, many don't even know where it is. One reason for this is its extremely steep access road, and another is that no trams or buses go there. The only way up is by using the kiosk's car service, making it an activity not suited for the average person's budget. Yet Gugger Hill, with its beautiful pine forests, truly deserves more popularity.

Figure 172.
Guggerhegy Kiosk

Walking to Gugger Hill isn't fashionable—people usually drive up. Once there, they enjoy a snack at the kiosk, which offers a truly unparalleled view. This area is particularly popular with those who love lounging in deck chairs. Every day, 50–60 deck chairs are rented by good-natured residents of Pest, who stretch out like crocodiles, raising the art of doing nothing to such a level that, by nightfall, it's a challenge to wake them.

Figure 173.
Guggerhegy Kiosk

The Gugger Hill kiosk has another peculiarity: it has no water supply. Water is brought up in barrels from the Pasarét Valley. It's not uncommon for people to wash their faces with soda water after a nap.

In March, 1944, Imre sold the restaurant in the Buda hills. However, in 1965 there was another For Sale notice for the same property by Imre, this time for the property itself.

July 22, 1965: The site of the former Gugger Mountain Kiosk plot is for sale.

Imre Löry

Imre died in Siofok, Hungary on September 1, 1967.

- We let them all know in pain

with those who knew and loved that Imre Lőry died at the age of 80 after a long suffering. His funeral was on September 4 in Siófok. They are mourned by his wife, brothers and relatives.

Lajos Lőry (1847 – 1906)

Lajos was Ignatz and Nina's second child and was born in March 1847. Lajos was a furrier's assistant in 1869, and possibly worked with his younger brother, Geza, in 1897, as a wine merchant (both had similar business occupations). No additional information about Lajos has been identified. He died in 1906 and is buried in the Kozma ut Jewish cemetery in Budapest.

Pál Peter Lőry (1892 – 1944)

Pál Péter Lőry, born in Budapest in 1892, was the youngest of five children and the fourth son of Géza (Lőwy) Lőry and Cecilia Schrecker. He attended local schools and graduated from József University as an engineer and architect. Pál worked for the Hungarian Telegraph Agency (MTI) as an engineer and head of the Vienna bureau before moving to Diósgyőr near Miskolc, where he established his own architectural firm. He married Irén Rothermel on December 4, 1926, and they had three children: Éva, Pál, and Tamás George Lőry (1927–2002).

The Feingold Affair and Legal Battles

Pál's career at MTI took a contentious turn when he became embroiled in the "Feingold Affair." The conflict centered on allegations that MTI breached its contract with the Vienna Telegraph Bureau by selling stock market information to a company linked to Feingold, a Galician Jewish banker. Pál accused MTI of undermining its Christian political credibility by associating with Feingold, sparking a public feud with Miklós Kozma, MTI's head.

Both men filed defamation lawsuits against each other, with Pál alleging that MTI's actions violated its exclusivity agreements. He provided evidence, including correspondence and witness testimony, but the dispute escalated.

In 1928, Pál sued Ignác Gábor, MTI's financial manager in Vienna, for slander. Gábor apologized in court but Pál rejected the apology, resulting in Gábor being sentenced to 14 days in prison and fined 100,000 kroner.

Escalation and Further Lawsuits

Following Gábor's conviction, Kozma filed a defamation case against Pál and his lawyer, Dr. Bertalan Geőcze, citing claims that MTI had tried to bribe Pál to

withdraw his accusations. During the trial, Kozma denied any bribery attempts but ultimately withdrew the charges. This did not resolve the broader dispute, as both parties pursued press-related lawsuits against one another.

A Personal Conflict: The Punch Heard in Court

In a related incident in 1925, Viennese newspaper ***Der Finanzmontag*** published an article accusing MTI of misconduct. During discussions among staff, Gábor accused Pál of leaking information to the paper. When Pál confronted Gábor in Budapest, the argument escalated, and Pál punched Gábor. Gábor sued for defamation and assault, resulting in Pál being fined 500,000 kroner. The judgment was final.

Legacy

Despite his achievements as an architect and engineer, Pál Péter Lőry's later years were overshadowed by legal battles and public controversies. His life reflects the volatile intersection of professional ambition, political tensions, and personal conflicts in early 20th-century Hungary.

THEFT

Diósgyőr-Vasgyár, August 1, 1928

Last night, a reckless thief ran amok in the villa of Pál Lőry, an architect from the Diósgyőr iron factory. The unknown thief broke into the villa with the help of a ladder, from where he took a cassette with him. The cassette contained a savings bank deposit book for a larger amount, approximately 10 pengő in cash and several important documents. The thief did not take the documents with him. After discovering the theft, the architect immediately took measures to disable the savings bank deposit book. The iron cassette was found empty on the embankment of the forest light railway in Pereces on Wednesday.

WELL, ALMOST

Miskolc August 11, 1928, Magyar Jövő

A motorcycle exploded and turned into a ditch on the national road in Lillafüred.

Miskolc, August 11. Report by J. On Saturday afternoon, a serious motorcycle accident occurred on the Miskolc-Lillafüred highway. Pál Lőry, an entrepreneur and architect from Miskolc, was riding his sidecar Harley-Davidson motorcycle at a medium speed towards Lillafüred when the engine exploded near the paper factory and the motorcycle turned into the ditch. The entrepreneur was lying in the ditch with his limbs bleeding, and those who rushed to his aid took him unconscious to the Erzsébet hospital in Miskolc. The motorcycle, which Pál Lőry bought on Friday, was broken into pieces and burned. The entrepreneur's condition is very serious, as he also suffered a concussion as a result of the accident.

August 14, 1928, Magyar Jövő

The victim of Saturday's motorcycle explosion has died

We reported that engineer and construction contractor Pál Lőry had an accident on Saturday night. He was on his way to Hámor on a motorcycle when, for unknown reasons, the motorcycle exploded at the paper factory bend and Lőry fell into the ditch. The unfortunate engineer was taken to Elizabeth Hospital with a fractured skull, where he died at dawn on Sunday after a few hours of suffering.

August 18, 1928, Magyar Jövő

Engineer Pál Lőry is alive. We reported that engineer and construction contractor Pál Lőry was involved in a motorcycle accident on Saturday. He was taken to the Erzsébet hospital with a fractured skull, where, with careful care, he managed to save his life and is now on the road to full recovery. Regarding the tragic accident, we were officially informed that engineer Pál Lőry had died. This information - thank God - turned out to be incorrect, and we took retaliatory measures against the person who - we repeat: from an official place, or at least usurping official authority - gave the information to the press.

Pál died in Budapest on December 26, 1944, at the age of 52, from shrapnel wounds sustained during a mine explosion at Attila körút 13-21. However, his

death record indicates that he was not formally buried until August 9, 1945. It is probable that during the ongoing siege, his body was initially interred in a temporary grave—likely at the nearby Vérmező[127] park—and subsequently reburied in its final resting place once hostilities ceased. The siege of Budapest began on December 25, 1944, one day before his death, and lasted until February 13, 1945, with Hungary officially declared liberated on April 4, 1945.

FAMILY

Thomas Lory Obituary

LORY, Thomas George-- *October 15, 1927 - July 3, 2002. Thomas G. Lory passed away and entered into eternity with Jesus his Lord and Savior on July 3, 2002. Born and raised in Diosgyor, Hungary he immigrated to California in 1957 and was a long time resident of Walnut Creek moving recently to Pacheco.*

Tom is survived by his loving wife Remedios (Med) Ledesma Lory, his son Thomas Paul Lory, of Mountain View and his sister Eva Lory of Hungary. Tom was preceded in death by his mother Iren, his father, Peter and his brother Paul.

Tom worked as a bookkeeper until he retired in 1992. He played semi-pro soccer while living in Hungary. His love of the sport continued when he immigrated to California. He founded and played for the Liberty Sport Club. He played for the French and Scottish 1st Division teams and played on the peninsula ""Old Boys"" team until age 70. Tom loved hockey and figure skating. He also played tennis, ping-pong and billiards. He enjoyed music, movies, bicycle riding, motor cycling and basketball. Photography was his best-loved hobby until he became ill. There will be a celebration of Tom's life on July 7th at 11:00 a.m. at the Hungarian Reformed Church in Redwood City. Memorial gifts are suggested to the Kaiser Hospice, 1425 South Main Street, Walnut Creek, CA 94596 or the Hungarian Reformed Church, 102 Laurel Street, Redwood City, CA 94063. For more information contact Hull's Walnut Creek Chapel, 925-934-5400.

[In December 1956, Tamas and family emigrated to California. Pal was naturalized as an American citizen in 1962.]

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[127] *Blood Field*

Geza Löwy (1848 – 1896)

Geza was a wine merchant and wholesaler. In 1879, he changed his surname to Lőry and began being known as Hugo Geza Lőry.

On Oct 26, 1882, Hugo Geza married Cecilia Schrecker in Budapest. Together, they had five children: Istvan (Stephan (1884-1975)) who eventually emigrated to the US, Imre Ferenc (1887-1957), Margit Hannah (1890), Gyorgy Guri (1892-1915:WWI), and Pal (1892-1944: Budapest).

While researching the Löwy family, I encountered a puzzling problem involving the brothers Géza and Hugo that took some persistence to unravel. City directories and newspaper advertisements from the time repeatedly mentioned a "Hugo Géza Lőry," listed as a wine merchant. This was perplexing—was Hugo Géza one person or two? And was this even the same family?

Birth records showed that Géza was born in 1848 and Hugo in 1851, and neither had a recorded middle name. I even considered the possibility that the family might have re-registered the same child under a different name due to a serious illness, a tradition in some families. The confusion deepened when I found that marriage records listed a Hugo Géza Löwy as marrying Cecília Schrecker, while a death record indicated it was Géza Löwy, not Hugo, who was married to Cecília. However, cross-referencing names in obituaries and other family records confirmed this was indeed the same family.

What I discovered was both surprising and deeply moving. The mystery was resolved when I found Hugo's death record, which had been missing from my files. It revealed that Hugo, born in 1851, had died at the young age of 22 from tuberculosis in 1873. After Hugo's death, his older brother Géza began using Hugo's name, creating the composite "Hugo Géza Lőry." It seems this was Géza's way of honoring his younger brother, with whom he likely shared a close bond. After some years, Géza eventually stopped using the name Hugo, but the gesture speaks volumes about the depth of their relationship.

Solving this mystery not only clarified the records but also shed light on the love and loss within the family—a poignant reminder of how names can carry legacies across generations.

In 1877 and later in 1879, most of Géza's siblings, including their sister Irma, began using the surname Lőry. Their father, Ignatz, did not.

Géza Lőry Shoots a Gun

Ellenzek 1881

It was only a peasant's hair's breadth away from a major accident in the Komló garden in Budapest yesterday morning at noon. There, an acquaintance of the innkeeper's wife, preparing for a long journey, borrowed a revolver from the lady. The revolver was about to be handed over to the lady when Géza Lőry, a wine merchant, came into the room through the window under the gate. There Viktória, the housewife, starts talking to Lőry, who asks her for the revolver and waves it around. "You be careful, it's loaded," she says, "for God's sake, don't point it at me or it'll go off, -- you want to teach me how to handle a gun? At that moment the gun goes off, missing the pretty young girl by a hair. The bullet, aimed at the heads of the patrons dining in the courtyard, flew through a plate glass window in the dining room and, ricocheting off the opposite wall, fell wearily to the floor. No one was injured. A foot and a half from the pierced glass table is a long table at which a company of newspaper writers now dines. And only print owner Sándor Kocsi and Kálmán Szekrényessy were sitting there; the other table-mates had already left.

The shards of glass that shattered all over the place hit Kálmán Szekrényessy on the back of the neck; Szekrényessy jumps up and exclaims, "I've been shot!" With that, he runs to where the shot came from. There stands the wine merchant Lőry, his pistol in his hand, and he babbles to our group: "The little lady gave me the pistol; she's the reason... ." Szekrényessy grabs the man with the revolver: "Did you shoot?" - "Yes." Whereupon Szekrényessy throws a mighty fist in Lőry's face and wrenches the pistol from his hand.

After much deliberation, I managed to find out what the real situation was: an unfortunate clumsiness and the lesson: if you don't know how to use a gun, don't pick it up. Although Lőry was very frightened, he had the presence of mind to give the pistol back to Szekrényessy, who immediately removed the five remaining bullets. (The rumor that Mr Meák, a regular of the Komló-garden, had been wounded in the neck is untrue. The bullet flew not far from him, but did not hit him.)

Jakob Löwy (1856 – 1893)

AKA Jenő Lőry

Jakob Löwy, later known as Jenő Lőry, was a prominent figure in Budapest's financial world during the late 19th century. By 1876 at 20 years old, he was publishing a popular stock market and lottery bulletin titled "*Magyar Mercur,*" and later became the owner of the *J. Lőry bank and currency exchange* business in Budapest on Hatvani ut 17, later Kossuth Lajos ut 15, a prominent location across the street from his brother-in-law's clothing business, Weiner és Grunbaum.

Jenő began his career as a respected banker and publisher of the ***Magyar Mercur*** in Budapest, which was expanded from a lottery and stock bulletin to become an important financial newsletter. He built a reputation for innovation and reliability, attracting a wide range of clients with frequent advertisements promoting his services in currency exchange, securities trading, government lottery tickets and stock market speculation. Jenő's bank was seen as a pillar of the financial community, and he successfully managed large sums while cultivating an image of sophistication and confidence. To cement his place in the financial world in Budapest, the Minister of Justice appointed Jenő as an expert to the Budapest Criminal Court for cases related to banking[128], and his publication, *Magyar Mercur*[129], earned official recognition for providing accurate financial information, further enhancing his reputation.

December 22, 1888
Magyar Mercur

In a circular dated December 11, 1888 (No. 80753 HL b.), addressed to all municipal authorities, the esteemed Hungarian Royal Minister of the Interior recommended Magyar Mercur, published by Jenő Lőry. The publication was highlighted as a specialized lottery bulletin providing reliable information on the results of drawings for securities issued within the Hungarian state and subject to lotteries. The Minister urged all municipal authorities to take note of this publication.

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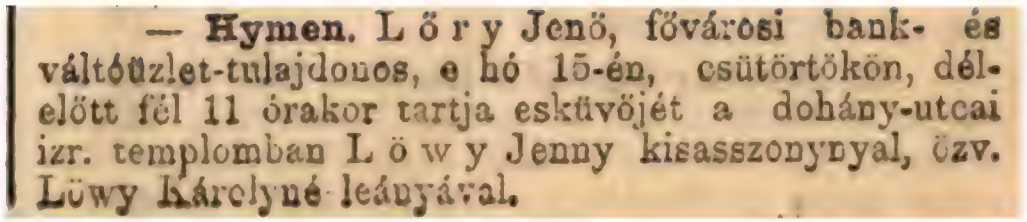
[128]*Budapest Hirlap, March 28, 1893 pg 11*

[129]*See a sample of the Magyar Mercur in the Appendix*

Beyond his business acumen, Jenő was connected to Budapest's Jewish community, as evidenced by his wedding on May 14, 1890, at the Dohány Street Synagogue to Jenny Löwy, daughter of a local family.

Budapesti Hírlap
14 May 1890


— Hymen. L ő r y Jenő, fővárosi bank- és váltóüzlet-tulajdonos, e hó 15-én, csütörtökön, délelőtt fél 11 órakor tartja esküvőjét a dohány-utcai izr. templomban L ö w y Jenny kisasszonynyal, özv. Löwy Károlyné leányával.

Jenő Lőry, owner of a Budapest banking and exchange business, will hold his wedding ceremony on the 15th of this month, Thursday, at 10:30 a.m. in the Dohány Street Jewish Synagogue. He will marry Miss Jenny Löwy, daughter of the widow of Károly Löwy.

Pesti Hirlap: May 16, 1890

A grand wedding took place this morning at the Dohány Street Synagogue. Jenő Lőwy, owner of a banking and exchange business, married Miss Jenny Lőwy, daughter of widow Károlyné Lőwy, a landowner. The wedding ceremony, conducted by Dr. Samu Kohn, the preacher, was attended by a distinguished crowd. Among those present were Péter Busbach, János Rónay, Dr. Ármin Neumann (members of Parliament), János Németh (president of the Royal Court of Justice), Gusztáv Schwartz, Henrik Marczali, and Alexander Bernát (university professors), among others. The synagogue was filled to capacity with guests

Jenő was known as a savvy player on the stock exchange, confidently managing portfolios and engaging in speculative trading. Many clients entrusted their savings and securities to him, believing that under his stewardship, their investments would grow. For a time, this belief held true. He amassed considerable wealth, living in a finely appointed home on Andrássy Avenue, with his family enjoying summers on the lush Margit Island.

But Jenő's successes also masked vulnerabilities. Complaints began to surface, particularly from working-class clients who had invested small savings in lottery-related schemes or securities. By law, securities sold this way were required to be kept in the banker's possession and available for inspection at any time, but it is evident that the required securities were no longer there. Re-

ports suggest Jenő routinely pawned the securities entrusted to him and only reclaimed them when he anticipated an inspection.

The European lottery system was originally developed by governments as a financial strategy to lower the interest rates on government bonds. Instead of paying regular interest, the government would occasionally hold a drawing, selecting a random number tied to a lottery bond's serial number and awarding a premium payout. The prospect of substantial winnings was enough to entice citizens to invest in these bonds.

However, the system attracted many unscrupulous individuals who exploited uneducated buyers through various fraudulent schemes. By the mid-1880s, lottery fraud had become so extensive that it even spread across the United States, where it caused significant financial losses mostly by the poor until the mid-1890s. In response, the U.S. enacted laws banning the use of the postal service for distributing lottery materials, which slowed its proliferation.

In January 1891, Jenő was close to being imprisoned as a criminal complaint was filed against him for embezzlement, but he avoided incarceration with help from friends and family members.

His aggressive trading strategies, particularly his short-selling tactics, were inherently risky. In the early 1890s, as market conditions shifted against him and the value of securities rose rather than fell, Jenő began to struggle. Losses mounted, and his reputation—once impeccable—became increasingly precarious. Amid this turmoil, his trust in those closest to him, including his young treasurer Samu Krausz, proved to be a fatal miscalculation.

Krausz, a junior employee who had risen to become Jenő's treasurer, exploited his position. With access to the bank's accounts, Krausz embezzled large sums over several years, allegedly stealing more than 100,000 forints [$760,000 USD in 2024]. He funneled some of the money to his brother, József, enabling him to open a flashy clothing store. When Jenő discovered the discrepancies in his books, he filed criminal charges against Samu. Krausz was briefly jailed but released on insufficient evidence, and shortly after launched a vindictive campaign to discredit his former employer.

In an act of vengeance, Krausz distributed letters to Jenő's clients, warning them that the bank was on the brink of collapse. The letters created panic

among depositors, who rushed to withdraw their funds. Already overleveraged and struggling to recover from market losses, Jenő could not meet their demands. His once-thriving business crumbled in a matter of days, and the man who had been a pillar of Budapest's financial world found himself in ruin.

On the morning of July 3, 1893, after receiving one too many demands he could not fulfill, Jenő disappeared from his bank. Later that day, he retreated to the quiet woods of Zugliget, near Normafa in the Buda hills. There, he wrote a note and took his own life with a gun, leaving behind a family devastated and a city grappling with the scandal.

In the aftermath, the courts delved into the Krausz brothers' crimes. Evidence emerged of their deceit, including falsified accounting entries and stolen securities. Samu Krausz was accused of directly contributing to Jenő's downfall, while József was charged with benefiting from his brother's theft. Initially, the court convicted Samu of embezzlement and forgery, sentencing him to three years of hard labor, while József received a lighter sentence of 18 months. However, upon appeal, both were acquitted, a decision that further enraged those who had suffered losses in the scandal.

The estate left behind by Jenő was a fraction of what was owed to creditors, with liabilities far exceeding the remaining assets. His death marked the tragic end of a man who had once stood at the pinnacle of Budapest's financial world, only to face overwhelming pressures and betrayal by those he trusted most.

Istvan Lőry (1884-1975)

The Cuba Connection

Istvan (Stephen) Lőry, son of Geza and Cecilia, immigrated to the US in March 1909 aboard the steamer Pannonia, when he was 25. When he first arrived in the US, Stephen lived in NYC in Manhattan. In September 1914, he married Ellen Halsey (b. 1893). It's my impression that my family appears to have been unaware that my great-grandmother's nephew was living nearby in Manhattan and later, the Bronx. But this was not uncommon for our families living in New York.

After working as a waiter at the Plaza hotel, and a waiter's captain at the Hotel McAlpin on Greely Square in NYC, Stephen went to college and graduated after 4 years becoming an accountant in the 1920s, and owning a printing business in the 1930s and 1940s. Istvan and Cecilia had one daughter, Gladys (b. 1916) who married Manuel Mañach in about 1944. The Mañach family has quite a story.

Manuel's siblings were Eugene and Dr. Jorge Mañach, and a sister, Nena. Nena married Andrew Goodman, owner of the famous luxury goods department store on 5th Ave. in New York City, *Bergdorf-Goodman*. Nena was an accomplished painter and patron of the arts. The city directory shows that Gladys and Manuel lived in the penthouse atop the store.

Manuel's brother, Dr. Jorge Mañach was a Cuban writer and attorney, considered among the most distinguished of his time. In the 1930s he taught at Columbia University in New York City. He was a participant of the revolution of 1933, and of the fights against Cuban Dictator Fulgencio Batista. While in Cuba in 1944 he was appointed Foreign Minister under Batista. Manuel's first cousin, Edelmira Sampedro y Robato, married the heir to the Spanish throne.

In October 2006, I located Gladys and Manuel's son, Gregory, who was living on Cape Cod, Massachusetts, and spoke with him on the phone. He was quite taken-aback by our discussion and seemed only distantly interested in discussing family (understandably). He did have a relationship with his grandfather, Istvan (Stephen), and told me that Istvan was on one of the ships that helped rescue the survivors of the Titanic. At the time, Istvan worked as a waiter on the steamers that crossed the Atlantic to New York. I was unable to locate any information that he was on any ships that attended to the Titanic. I did send Greg several documents via email, but he never replied. Greg died in December 2008.

Gyorgy Lőry (1892-1915)

Gyorgy Guri Lőry was the third son and fourth child of Geza and Cecila Schrecker. His siblings were Istvan, Imre, Hannah and Pal. Born in January 1892, Gyorgy enlisted as a soldier in the 5th Hungarian Infantry Regiment and fought in Bukovec, Kosice, Slovakia. In April, 1915, he was killed in action. Below is a heavily edited diary entry from one of the unit's soldiers, Ernő Nemess.

Ernő Nemess: Eighteen National Defenders
A Publication of the Soproni Napló
Struggles on the Hungarian Border: (page 136)
April 1915[130]

"Our April skirmish is a battle for self-defense. The question is whether modern, destructive war will be transferred to this land, which has seen so many storms and is soaked in blood, or whether we will succeed in resisting and keep this horrible drama outside our borders. Hungarian boys are fighting with such heroic self-sacrifice across the entire front that, after a month of defiant resistance, we may now launch a major offensive, driving the danger away from our own land and forcing destruction onto enemy territory.

In the fiercest battles, the Russians intended to march all the way to Budapest and Vienna in their campaign of conquest. Their troops believed the Hungarian capital was near and would repeatedly ask prisoners, 'Is Budapest still far?' When told it was far off, they shook their heads in disbelief.

Suddenly, there's another alarm: "Quickly assemble. Departure at one o'clock." This time, we must retake the heights to the right of Mali Bukovec. The path is difficult through waist-deep snow, dense forests, and fallen trees. Bullets come from unseen enemies, and casualties mount. One soldier, struck mid-aim, remained sitting upright, motionless. A sergeant scolded him for not moving, only to discover the man had died heroically moments earlier.

A small group of 11 men, led by a cadet, charged a Russian position 30 steps away, capturing 93 soldiers, including their commanding lieutenant. Inspired,

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[130]*https://adtplus.arcanum.hu/en/view/MEVH_AlakulatTort_073/?pg=236&layout=s (source: Budapesti Hírlap, Budapesti Közlöny / 1941-04*

other sections followed suit, reclaiming strategic positions and capturing hundreds more prisoners.

On our way back, we found the bodies of two fallen comrades, Ernő Horváth Dóri and György Lőry. Late that evening, we reached the village. The next day, near Kistopolya, they were buried with full military honors. The burial service, deeply moving, honored their sacrifice for the homeland."

Emilie Löwy (1858 - 1929)

Emilie is the daughter of Ignatz and his second wife, Josefin Fink. Little is known about Emilie other than she married twice: to Simon Brandiesz in August 1884, and to Gustav Posel (marriage date unknown). No known children from either marriage.

Löry György
hadapród

"György Lőry Death Notice: Az Est, April 28, 1915

Hermine Löwy (1860 - 1878)

Hermine was the last child for Ignatz and Josefin. Sadly, Hermine died young at the age of 18 from hemoptysis (spitting up blood from the respiratory tract), possibly from pneumonia or lung cancer.

IMPACT OF THE TREATY OF TRIANON

Magyarság

December 28, 1920

[the following news article details the impact of the war and, in particular, the treaty's fallout.]

The economic situation in Transylvania is extremely tense. The ill-intentioned exchange of money and the related panamas [swindles or scheme] not only caused enormous damage to Hungarians (for which they were primarily intended), but also threatened the entire economic life of Romania with a crisis. Lack of money destroys the whole trade. The trade of the separated Hungarian cities is on the verge of bankruptcy, and property value is dropping. The real estate trade has, so to speak, completely ceased. Houses and land, for which a fortune was paid a few months ago, cannot be sold. Only the prices of "necessary goods" are becoming more expensive, to the extent that the Hungarian market can be said to be cheap. The latest sign of economic bankruptcy is that the Transylvanian industrial companies are shutting down their operations. Last week, wood production ceased at Baron Groedel's Máramos lumberyards. Many thousands of workers were laid off because the company managers stopped payments due to a lack of funds.

Borders during Hungarian-Romanian war of 1919

Economically, 61 percent of arable land, 88 percent of timber, 62 percent of railroads, 64 percent of hard surface roads, 83 percent of pig iron output, 55 percent of industrial plants and 67 percent of credit and banking institutions of the former Kingdom of Hungary now lay within the territory of Hungary's neighbors. Romania, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia had to assume part of the financial obligations of the former Kingdom of Hungary on account of the parts of its territory under their sovereignty.

Military considerations diverted the Treaty from the Wilson principles, making economic cooperation within the Carpathian Basin more difficult. The borders bisected transport links—in the Kingdom of Hungary the road and railway network had a radial structure, with Budapest in the center. Many roads and railways running along the new borders and interlinking radial transport lines lay within the territory of Hungary's neighbors.

The military conditions were similar to those imposed on Germany by the Treaty of Versailles; the Hungarian army was to be restricted to 35,000 men and there was to be no conscription. Further provisions stated that in Hungary, no railway would be built with more than one track.

Hungary also renounced all privileges in territories outside Europe that belonged to the former Austro-Hungarian monarchy.

MISCELLANEOUS

The Marcasite Necklace

As noted in an earlier chapter, Melanie visited the US in 1910 with Hermann, Arthur and Paula. During their visit, Melanie met with her cousins, Eugene, Cornel, Florence and Polly Zeisler. During their visit, Melanie gave them photographs of herself and her mother, Regina Weiner. Years later, a marcasite necklace was in the possession of Florence upon her passing that would not typically have been purchased by the Zeislers. We suspect it was a gift from Melanie, with the design dating from that period.

The following is an excerpt from an email thread dated January 12, 2022, that included Jerry Zeisler, Bonnie Zeisler Frederics, Zora Svab Maliga, Erzsébet Svab Balasko, and Irina Leimbacher, as part of a discussion about our common ancestor, Baroness Melanie Weiner Groedel.

From Bonnie:

"...when I was a child our Aunt Lois (my father's sister) used to jokingly say we were related to royalty and called us the ***von*** Zeisler's. The adults laughed and no one ever talked about it beyond that. When I was a young adult, I was visiting with my great-Aunts and Uncle and asked them about it. Aunt Florence took out the photos of Melanie and Paula [correction: Melanie and Regina -jz] and gave them to me. They then told me how we were related to Melanie, that she remembered her coming to the US with Paula and staying at the Waldorf Astoria or one of the other posh hotels and it was written in the Society section of the newspaper. They met with them once during that visit and Melanie gave them the photos. I think she also gave one of them a sparkly silver and marcasite necklace and earrings set which I inherited as nobody else wanted it. The back is stamped Germany. I can't imagine either Florence or Polly wearing it, totally not their style, which is why I believe it was from Melanie."

On January 28, 2022, Bonnie sent a picture of the necklace and included this correction from her previous email:

"I thought this was stamped Germany but it was my jeweler at that time told me it was German because of the design and he was Eastern European. It's

stamped Sterling. In either case, I don't see Aunties wearing something this elaborate. Marcasite necklaces were popular in the early 1900's through the early 1930s and had a resurgence in the 1950s."

Figure 174.

Marcasite Necklace

Given to Polly and Florence Zeisler by their cousin, Baroness Melanie Groedel

CEMETERY PHOTOGRAPHS

Figure 175. Groedel Gravesite: Vienna Friedhof

Figure 176. Gravesite of Baroness Melanie Groedel and her brother, Arthur Weiner Vescy fenyvesi (2014)

The plaque on Arthur's grave is missing

IN RETROSPECT

After years of dedicated research and countless hours exploring the most intimate details of my family's history, I have uncovered not only their remarkable exploits and overlooked European industrial empires but also gained a deeper understanding of 19th- and early 20th-century European history. This journey has taken me through the bustling cities of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and Germany, immersing me in regions transitioning from feudalism and serfdom to the rise of capitalism, all against the backdrop of two world wars. Along the way, I have wrestled with themes of nationalism, ethics, economic power, assimilation, anti-Semitism, and the devastating reach of war—forces that shaped my ancestors' lives in ways I had never fully grasped before. It has been a profound experience to uncover how they lived, loved, and, in many cases, endured through such turbulent times.

One of the greatest challenges in this endeavor has been truly immersing myself in the minds and hearts of the individuals I have documented—to understand their joys, fears, and motivations, and to gain insight into how they perceived their world and the personal struggles they faced. While certain inferences can be made, much of my work has involved synthesizing and contextualizing information from newspaper accounts, second-hand stories, and historical records. To keep the narrative engaging, I have provided historical context where necessary, yet I have rarely attempted to interpret their emotions beyond what is explicitly available. Instead, I leave it to the reader to envision the personal sentiments of those who populate these stories.

In an ideal world, I would have been able to ask them questions, observe their daily lives, and witness their interactions with family members. I would have liked to hear the words they used to comfort their children, the tone they took with their spouses, and how they navigated illness, loss, business struggles, war, and the societal pressures of assimilation. Understanding how they were treated—how they responded to misogyny, economic hardship, or the complexities of high society—would have been invaluable. Only in rare instances, such as with Hermann and Melanie, have I had the privilege of reading their thoughts firsthand, offering a glimpse into their emotions and motivations.

As many genealogists can attest, the journey of uncovering family history is often marked by missed opportunities—chances to connect with relatives who possessed invaluable knowledge but whose stories are now lost to time. One such moment lingers with me: Zora Kussevich, the daughter of Irén Groedel, lived just 45 minutes from my home in Virginia in 2009. I intended to visit but hesitated too long, and by the time I was ready, the opportunity had passed. The weight of this self-imposed loss remains, knowing that stories and insights I was so eager to preserve are now beyond reach.

Yet, despite these missed connections, I have been fortunate to fulfill one of my greatest hopes—discovering previously unknown branches of my family in Hungary and America. In 2001, I met Sandor Lonyay, a second cousin once removed, and in 2009, an unexpected email from Zsolt Balasko revealed that the baroness I had written about online was his great-great-grandmother. These discoveries have led to treasured exchanges of stories and photographs, the forging of meaningful family relationships, and a deepened connection to my heritage. While I am uncertain how these revelations will shape my future, this journey has been both enthralling and introspective. Much like a road trip, it has involved reflecting on the paths taken, the places explored, and the best way to share these stories. In the end, the narratives we uncover and pass down define not only who we were but who we are, ensuring that our family's history lives on for generations to come.

Jerry Zeisler
Ellicott City, MD
April 2025

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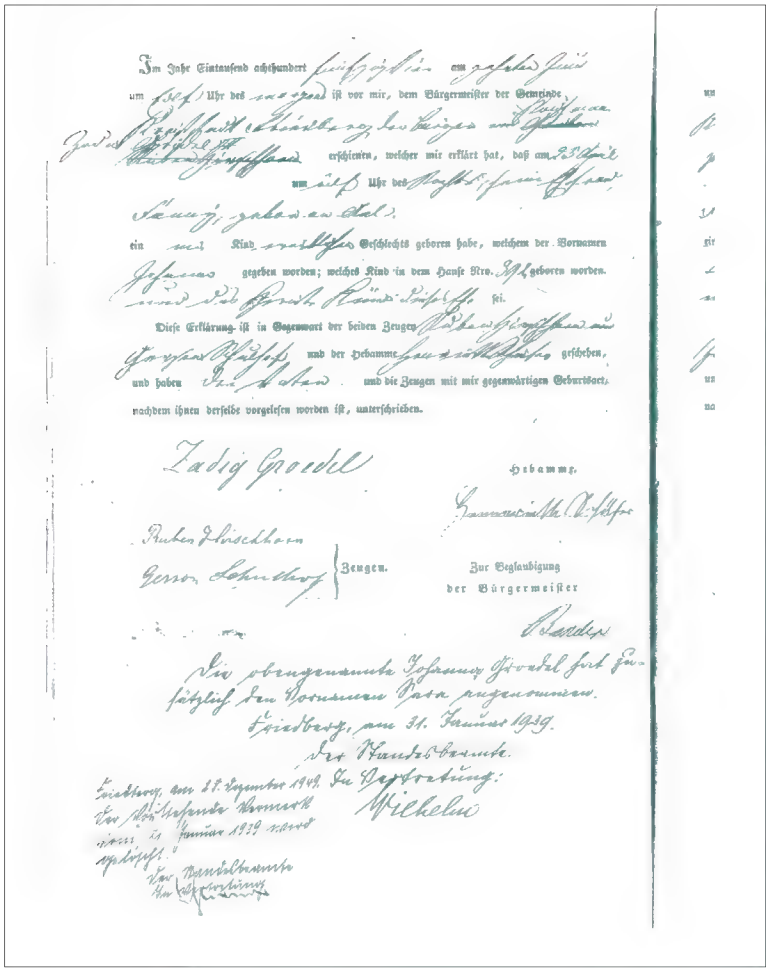
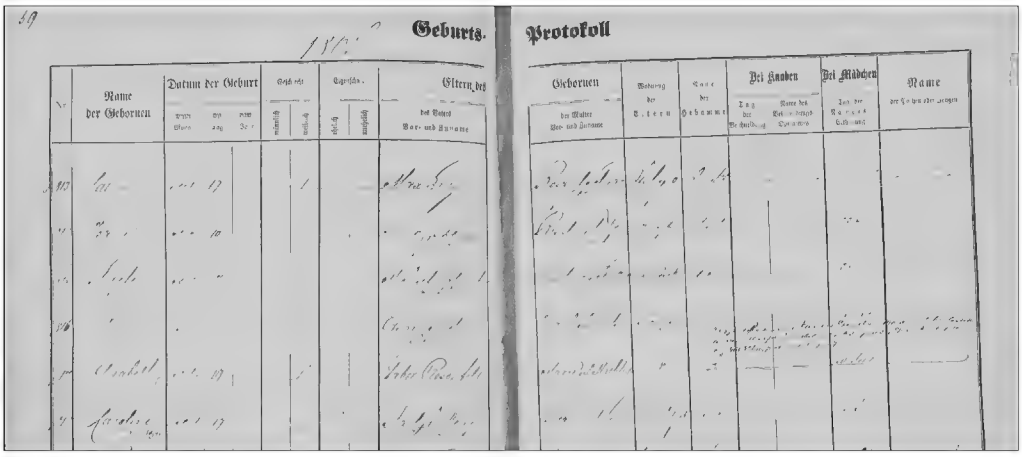
VITAL RECORDS AND NOTICES

I am including certain vital records that are more difficult to obtain, even though they will eventually be accessible online. Records from present-day Romania (Máramarossziget) are subject to a 100-year restriction, so I am including those that are currently available.

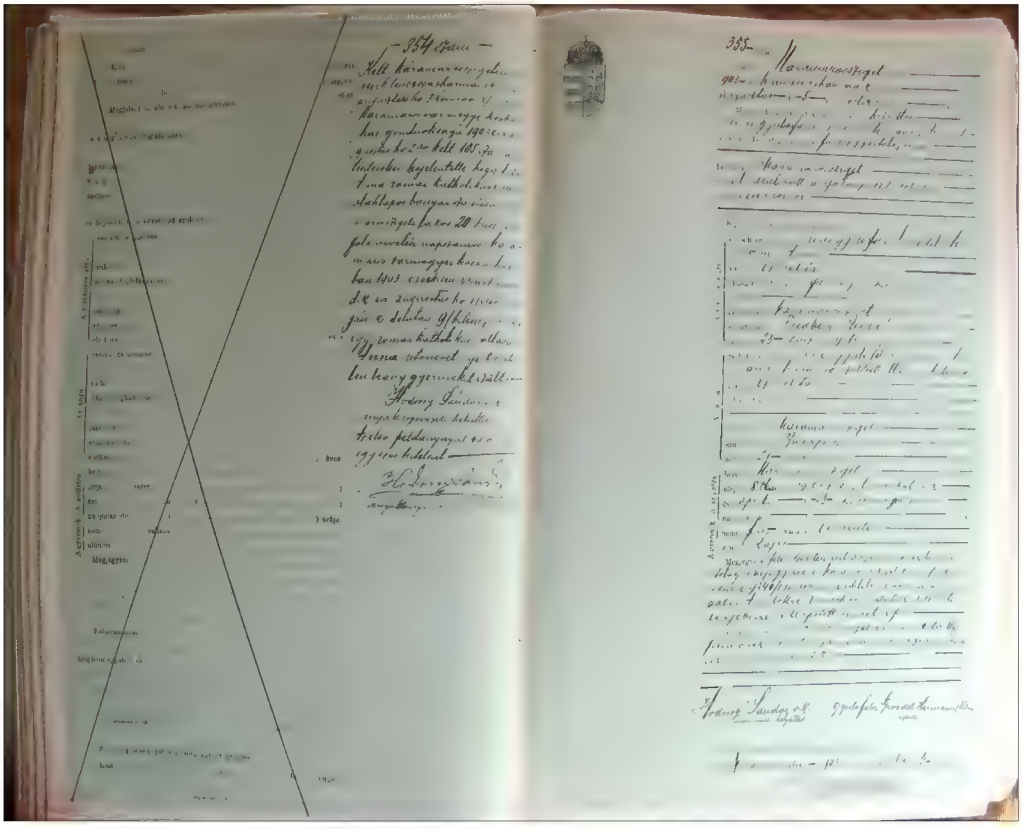
Birth Records

Hermann Groedel:
May 7, 1856



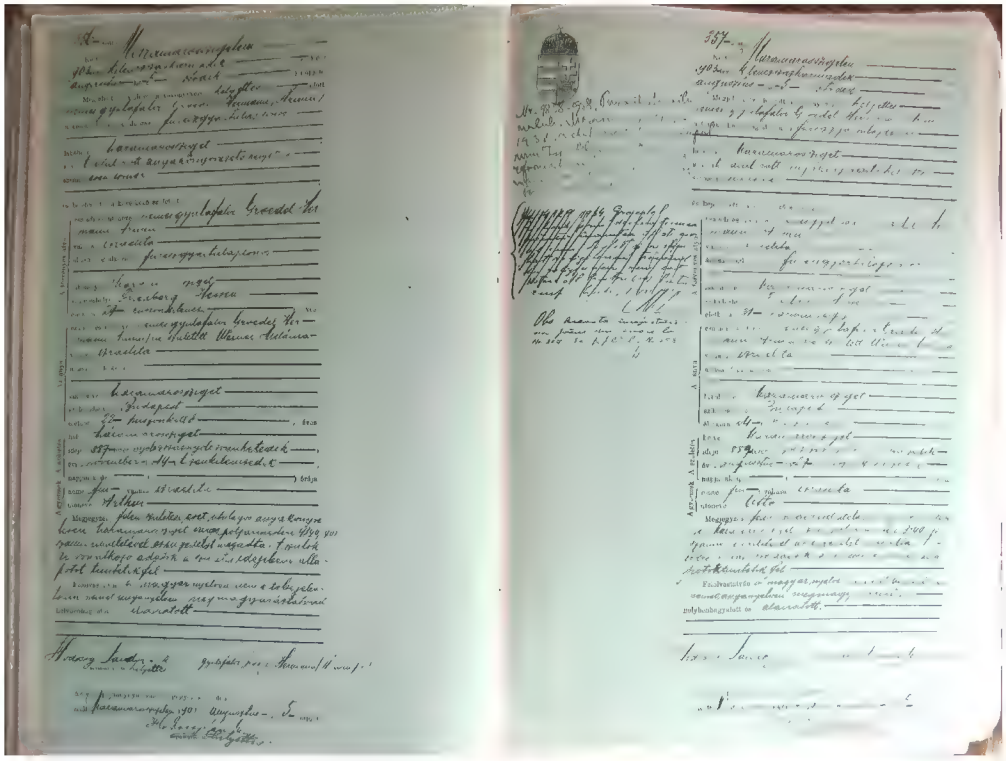


Melanie:
September 19, 1865

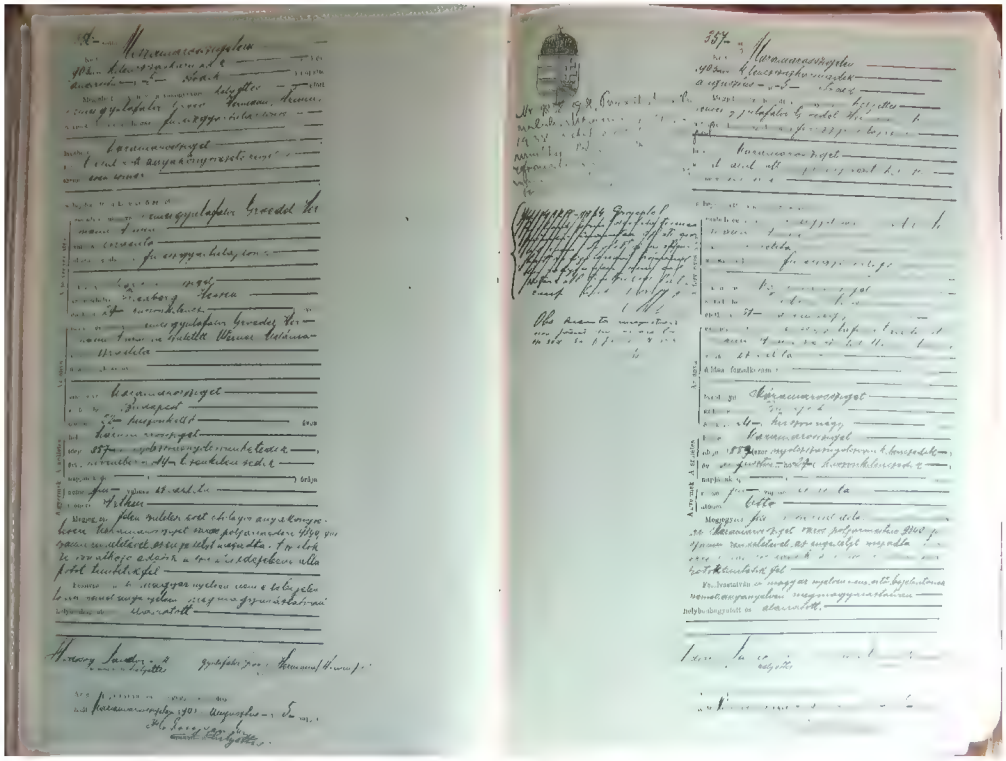


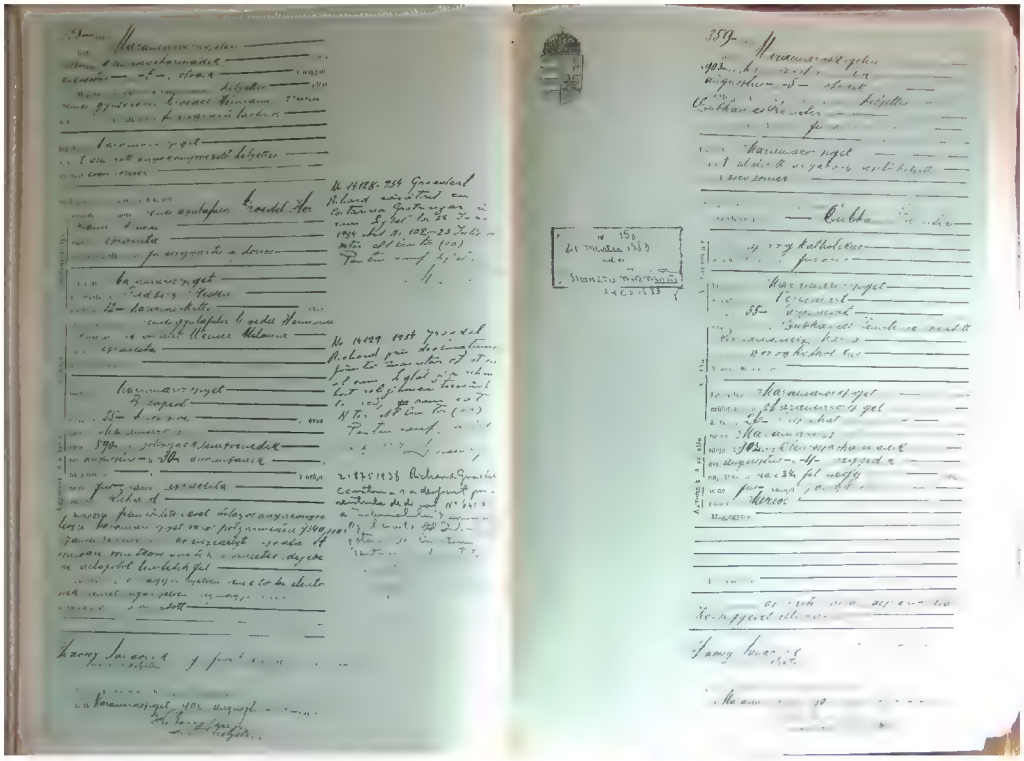
Lajos:
April 28, 1886

Arthur:
November 19, 1887

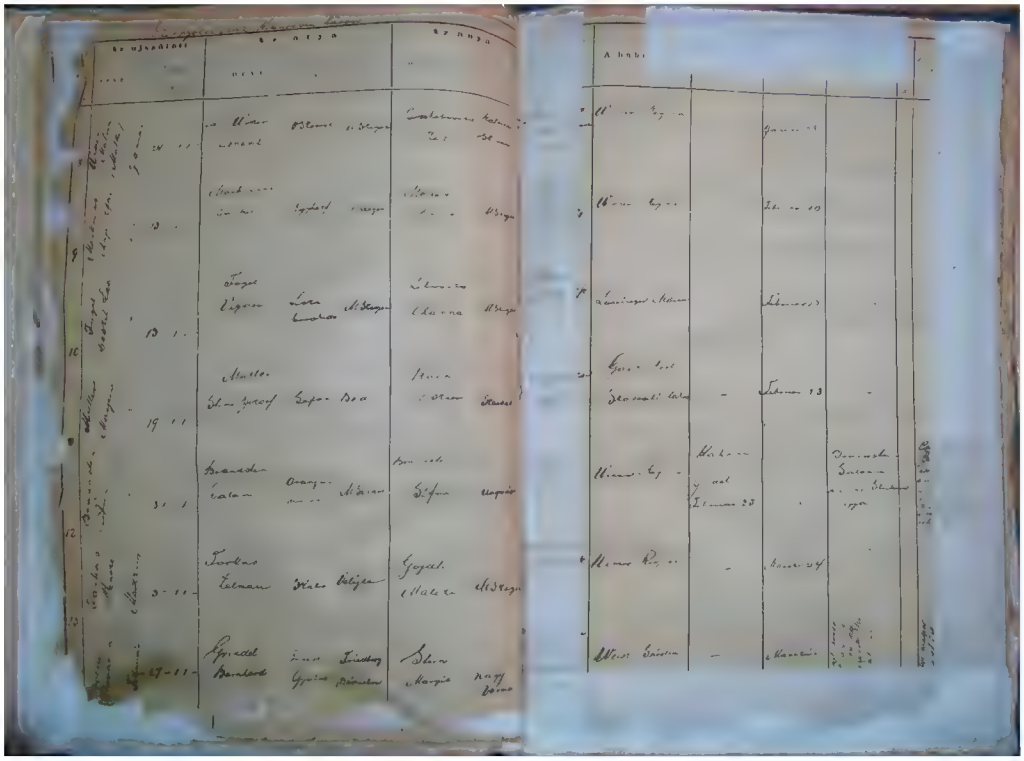


Otto:
August 29, 1889



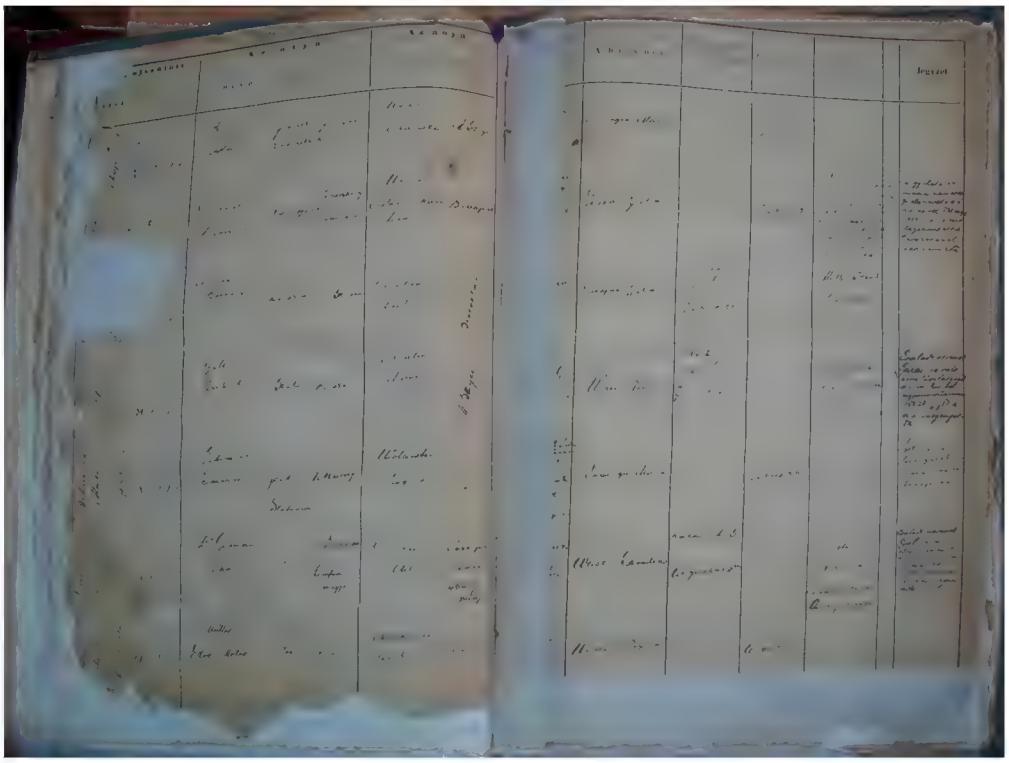


Richard:
August 30, 1890

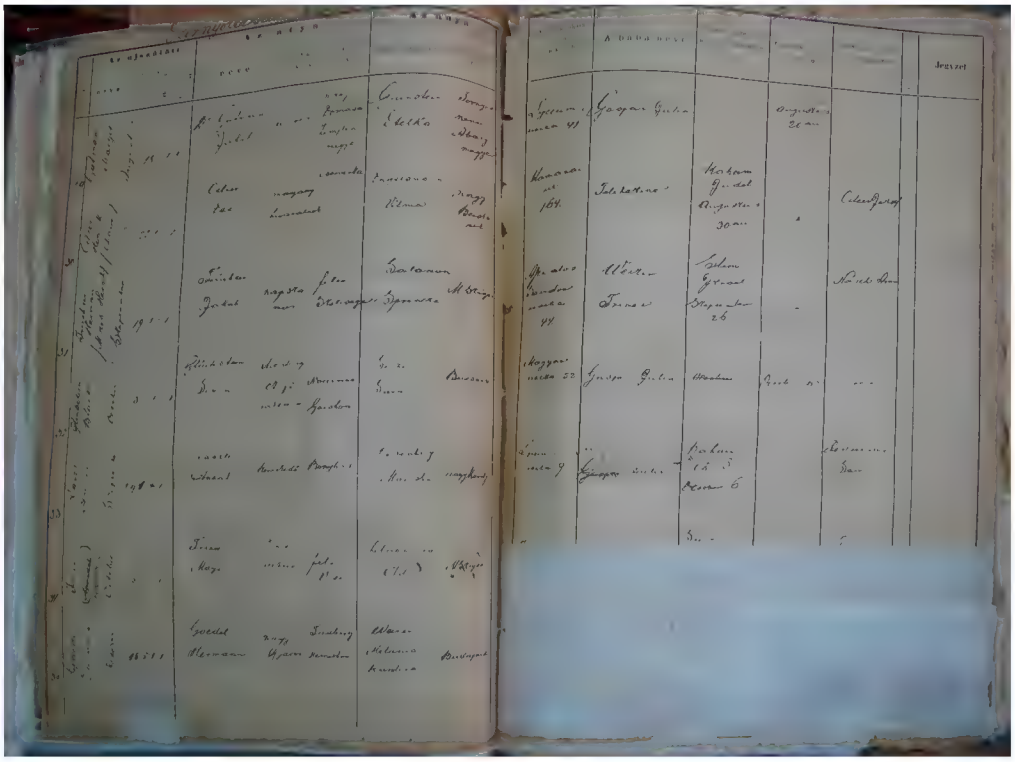


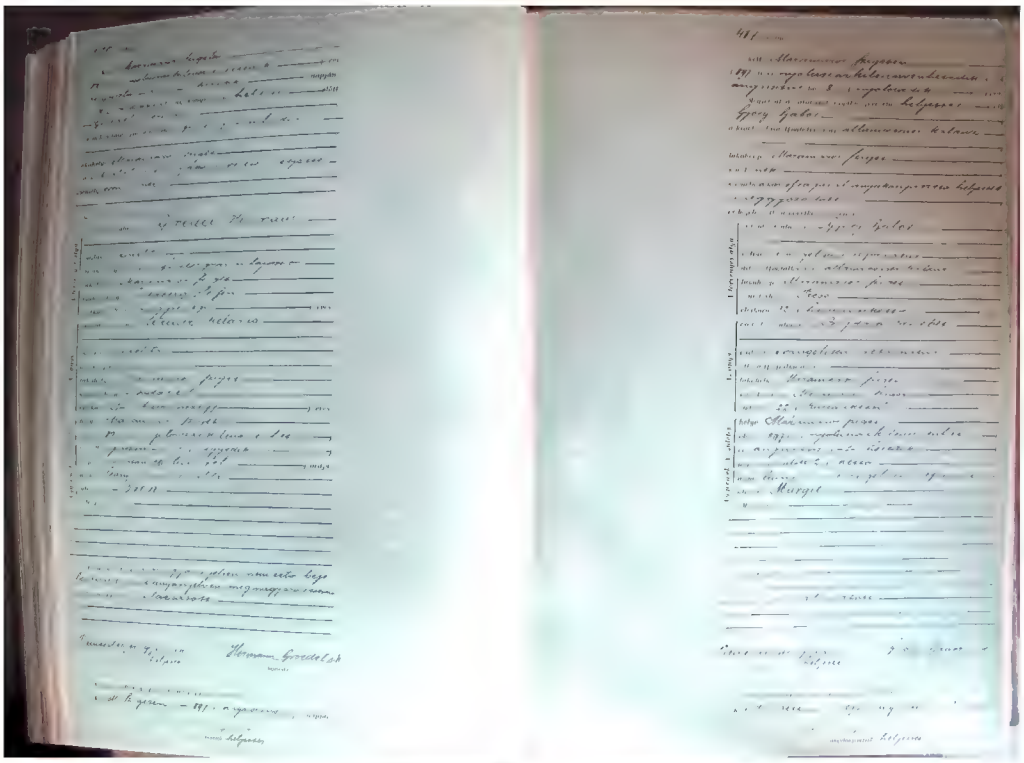
Theodora:
February 27, 1893

Paula:
June 9, 1893

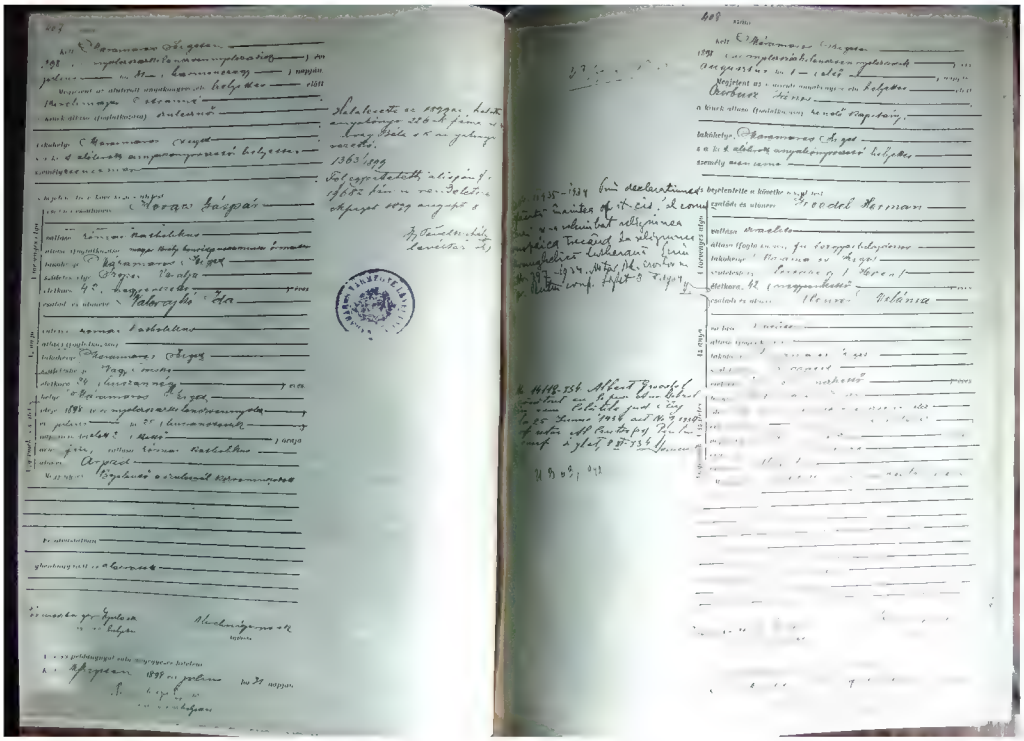


Stefanie:
October 15, 1894



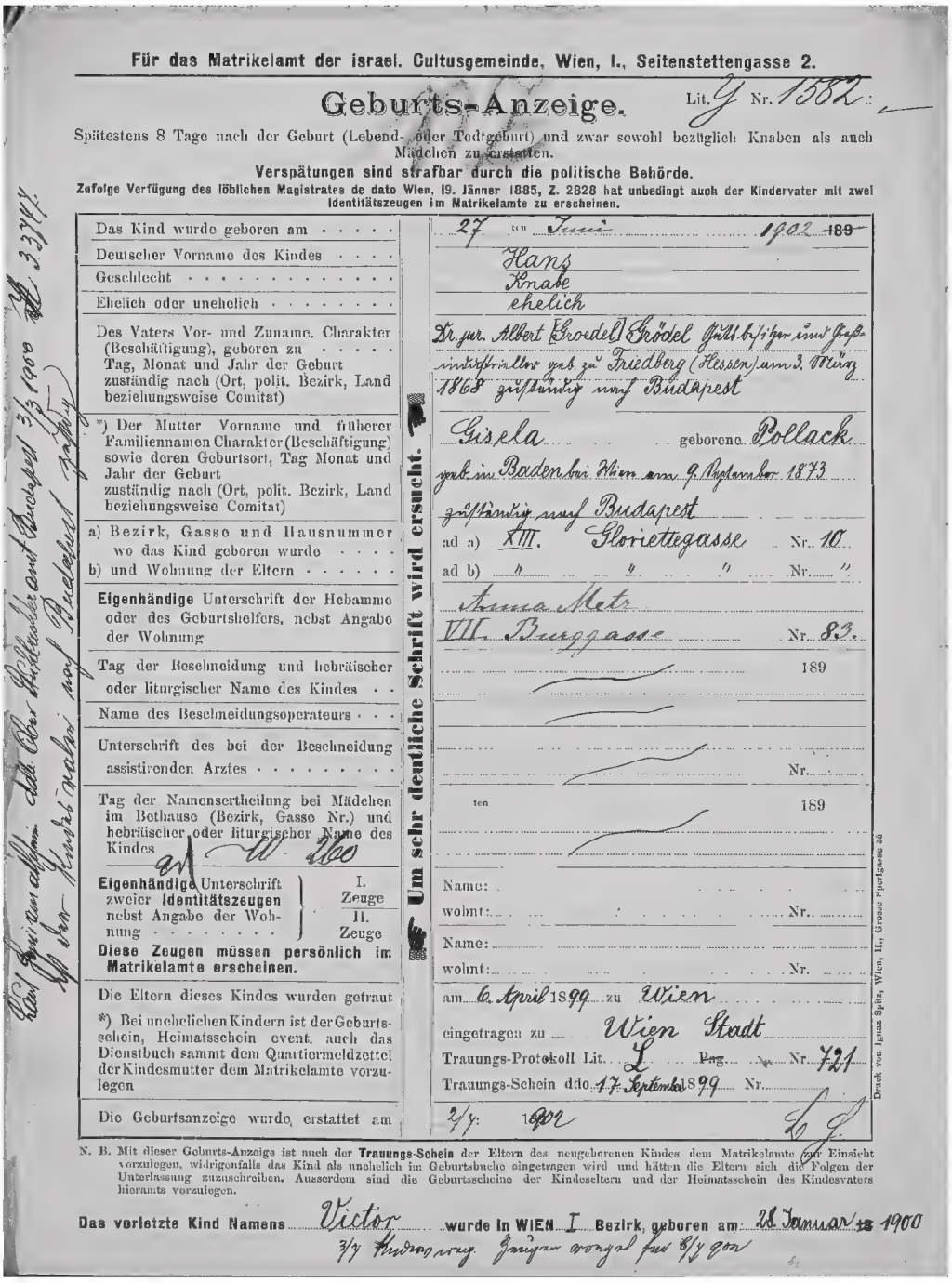


Iren:
August 4, 1897



Albert:
July 29, 1898

Hans:
June 27, 1902



Für das Matrikelamt der israel. Cultusgemeinde, Wien, I., Seitenstettengasse 2.

Geburts-Anzeige. Lit. Y Nr. 1582

Spätestens 8 Tage nach der Geburt (Lebend- oder Todtgeburt) und zwar sowohl bezüglich Knaben als auch Mädchen zu erstatten.

Verspätungen sind strafbar durch die politische Behörde.

Zufolge Verfügung des löblichen Magistrates de dato Wien, 19. Jänner 1885, Z. 2828 hat unbedingt auch der Kindervater mit zwei Identitätszeugen im Matrikelamte zu erscheinen.

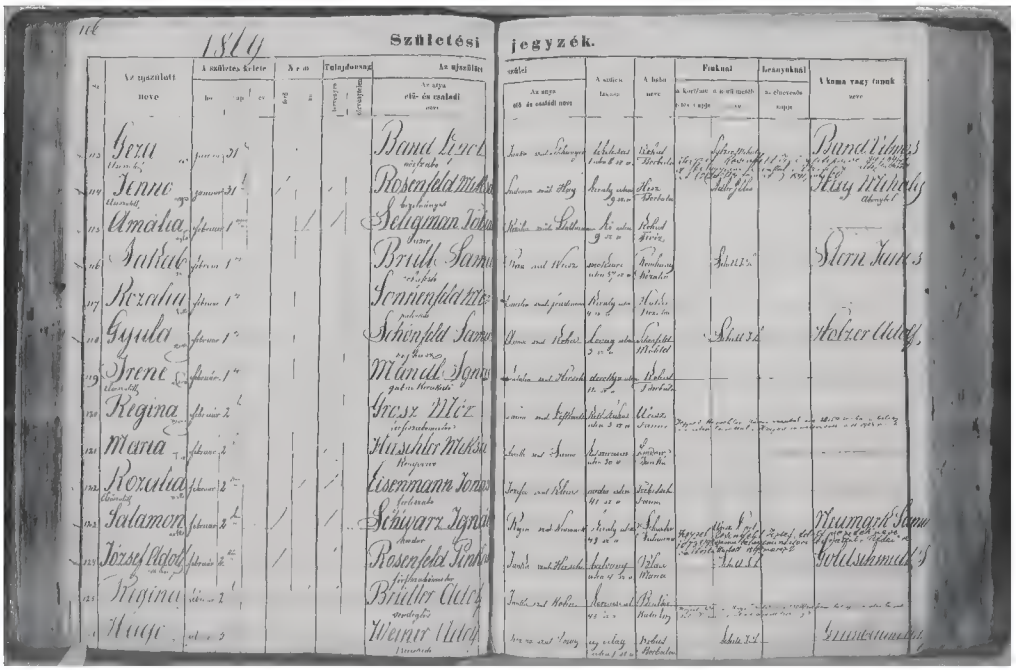
Um sehr deutliche Schrift wird ersucht.

Das Kind wurde geboren am	27 ten Juni 1902 189
Deutscher Vorname des Kindes	Hans
Geschlecht	Knabe
Ehelich oder unehelich	ehelich
Des Vaters Vor- und Zuname, Charakter (Beschäftigung), geboren zu Tag, Monat und Jahr der Geburt zuständig nach (Ort, polit. Bezirk, Land beziehungsweise Comitat)	Dr. jur. Albert Grodel Grödel Gutsbesitzer und Gesellschafter prot. zu Friedberg (Hessen) am 3. März 1868 zuständig nach Budapest
*) Der Mutter Vorname und früherer Familiennamen Charakter (Beschäftigung) sowie deren Geburtsort, Tag Monat und Jahr der Geburt zuständig nach (Ort, polit. Bezirk, Land beziehungsweise Comitat)	Gisela geborene Pollack geb. in Baden bei Wien am 9. September 1873 zuständig nach Budapest
a) Bezirk, Gasse und Hausnummer wo das Kind geboren wurde	ad a) XIII. Florettegasse Nr. 10
b) und Wohnung der Eltern	ad b) " " " Nr. "
Eigenhändige Unterschrift der Hebamme oder des Geburtshelfers, nebst Angabe der Wohnung	Anna Metz VII. Burggasse Nr. 83.
Tag der Beschneidung und hebräischer oder liturgischer Name des Kindes	ten 189
Name des Beschneidungsoperateurs	
Unterschrift des bei der Beschneidung assistirenden Arztes	Nr.
Tag der Namensertheilung bei Mädchen im Bethause (Bezirk, Gasse Nr.) und hebräischer oder liturgischer Name des Kindes	ten 189
Eigenhändige Unterschrift zweier **Identitätszeugen** nebst Angabe der Wohnung — I. Zeuge	Name: wohnt: Nr.
II. Zeuge	Name: wohnt: Nr.
Diese Zeugen müssen persönlich im Matrikelamte erscheinen.	
Die Eltern dieses Kindes wurden getraut	am 6. April 1899 zu Wien
*) Bei unehelichen Kindern ist der Geburtsschein, Heimatsschein event. auch das Dienstbuch sammt dem Quartiermeldzettel der Kindesmutter dem Matrikelamte vorzulegen	eingetragen zu Wien Stadt Trauungs-Protokoll Lit. L Pag. Nr. 721 Trauungs-Schein ddo. 17 September 1899 Nr.
Die Geburtsanzeige wurde erstattet am	2/7 1902

N. B. Mit dieser Geburts-Anzeige ist auch der **Trauungs-Schein** der Eltern des neugeborenen Kindes dem Matrikelamte zur Einsicht vorzulegen, widrigenfalls das Kind als unehelich im Geburtsbuche eingetragen wird und hätten die Eltern sich die Folgen der Unterlassung zuzuschreiben. Ausserdem sind die Geburtsscheine der Kindeseltern und der Heimatsschein des Kindesvaters hieramts vorzulegen.

Das vorletzte Kind Namens Victor **wurde in WIEN** I **Bezirk, geboren am** 28 Januar 1900

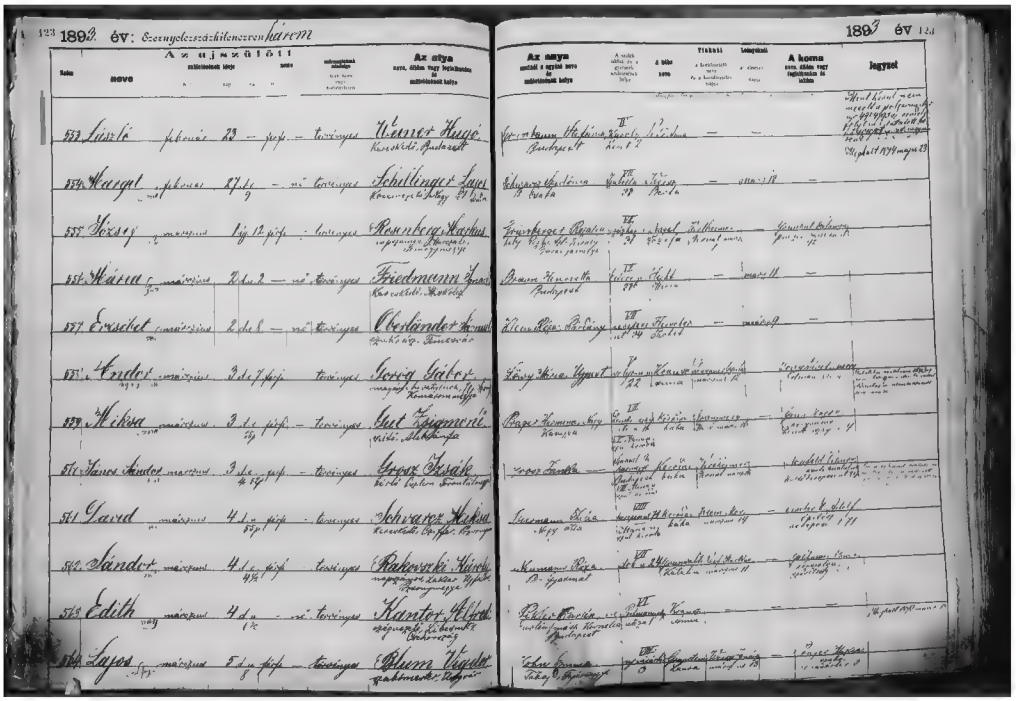
Druck von Ignaz Spitz, Wien, II., Grosse Mautgasse 35



Születési jegyzék.

Hugo Weiner

(Vecsey): February 3, 1869



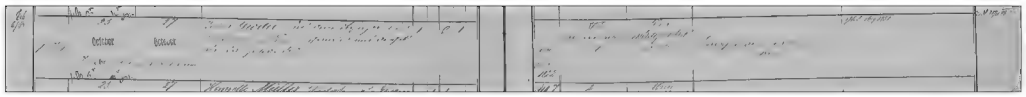
1893 év

Laszlo Weiner

(Vecsey): February 3, 1893

Death Records

Groedel Burial Plot
Wiener Zentralfreidhof, Vienna
Hermann
Lajos
Arthur
Otto
Richard
Valerie
Zadig and Fanny are in a different section of the same cemetery



Zadig Groedel,
1896

Seite 16 Wien, Dienstag **Neue Freie Presse.** 27. October 1896 Nr. 11556

Todes-Anzeige.

Allen Verwandten und Bekannten zur Nachricht, dass unser innigstgeliebter Gatte, Vater, bezw. Schwieger- und Grossvater, Bruder und Onkel, Herr

Zadig Groedel,

Chef und Senior der Firma „Gebrüder Groedel",

am Sonntag den 25. October, Abends 7 Uhr, im 75. Jahre seines thatenreichen Lebens im Hause seiner Tochter sanft verschieden ist.

Die irdische Hülle des theuren Todten wird Dienstag Nachmittags um 3 Uhr vom Sterbehause: Sternwartestrasse Nr. 50, nach dem Central-Friedhofe, israel. Abtheilung, zur ewigen Ruhe bestattet.

Die tieftrauernden Hinterbliebenen.

Todes-Anzeige.

Allen Geschäftsfreunden und Bekannten bringen wir zur Kenntniss, dass unser allverehrter Chef und Senior der Firma Gebrüder Groedel, Herr

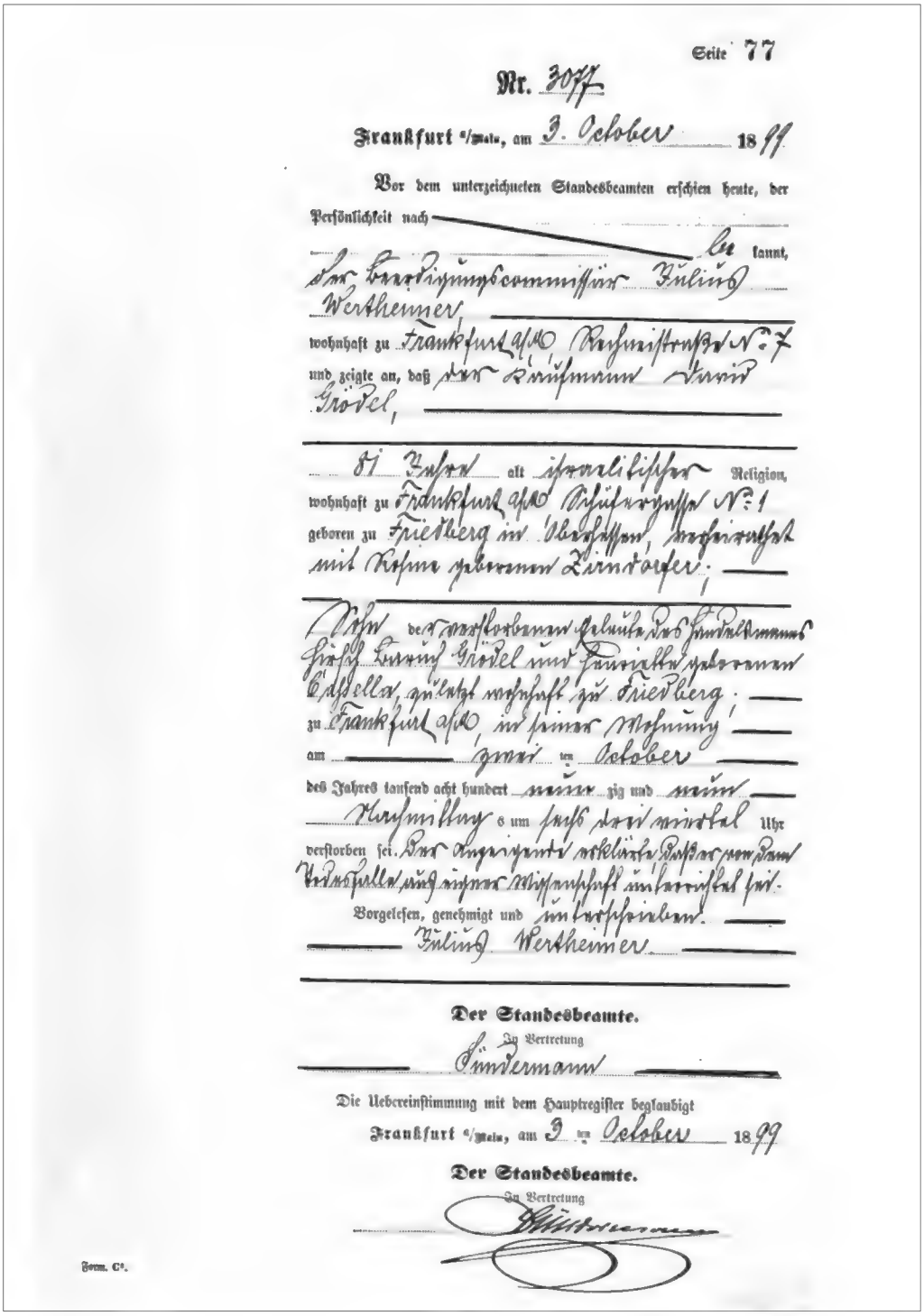
Zadig Groedel,

am Sonntag den 25. October, Abends 7 Uhr, im 75. Jahre seines thatenreichen Lebens sanft verschieden ist.

Gebrüder Groedel.

David Groedel

Death Record, 1899



Seite 77

Nr. 3077

Frankfurt a/Main, am 3. October 1899

Vor dem unterzeichneten Standesbeamten erschien heute, der Persönlichkeit nach ~~[illegible]~~ bekannt, der Verpflichtungscommissär Julius Werthemer, wohnhaft zu Frankfurt a/M. Rechneistrasse No. 7 und zeigte an, daß der Rentner David Groedel,

81 Jahre alt israelitischer Religion, wohnhaft zu Frankfurt a/M. Rechneigasse No. 1 geboren zu Friedberg in Oberhessen, verheirathet mit Rosina geborenen Landauer; Wohn der verstorbene Gatte der Anzeigende das Handelsmann Joseph Ludwig Groedel und Henriette geborenen Edlsheller, zuletzt wohnhaft zu Friedberg; zu Frankfurt a/M. in seiner Wohnung am ~~[illegible]~~ gestern den 2. October des Jahres tausend acht hundert neun und neunzig Nachmittags 6 um sechs drei viertel Uhr verstorben sei. Der Anzeigende erklärte Kenntniß von dem Todesfalle und seiner Wissenschaft unterschrieben sich.

Vorgelesen, genehmigt und unterschrieben.

Julius Werthemer

Der Standesbeamte.
In Vertretung
Landermann

Die Uebereinstimmung mit dem Hauptregister beglaubigt

Frankfurt a/Main, am 3. den October 1899

Der Standesbeamte.
In Vertretung

Form. C°.

Fannie Groedel,
1901

Todes-Anzeige.

Allen Verwandten und Bekannten theilen wir mit, dass unsere innigstgeliebte Mutter, Gross- und Schwiegermutter, Frau

Fanny Groedel,

Witwe nach Z. Groedel,

am Dienstag den 26. Februar sanft verschieden ist.

Die irdische Hülle der theuren Verblichenen wird Freitag den 1. März, Nachmittags um 2 Uhr, auf dem Central-Friedhof (israel. Abtheilung) in der Familiengruft zur ewigen Ruhe bestattet.

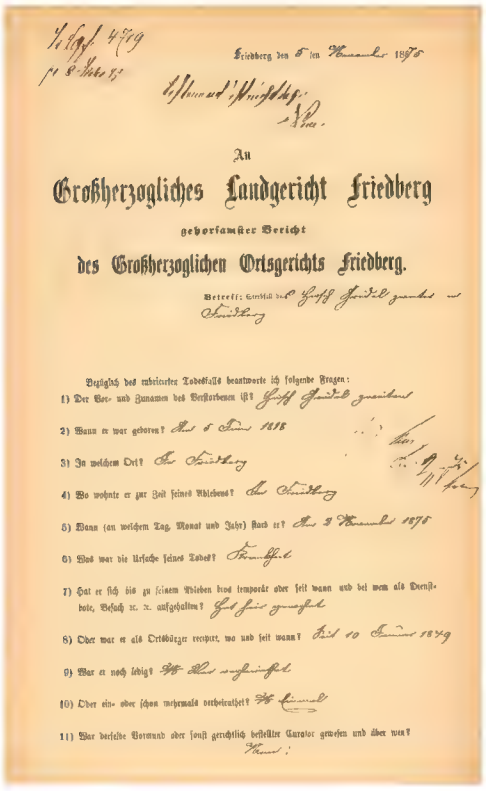
(Treffpunkt: XIX., Hauptstrasse 35.)

Die tieftrauernden Hinterbliebenen.

Kranzspenden werden dankend abgelehnt. — Statt jeder besonderen Anzeige.

Hirsch Groedel,

1875 (son of David)



Friedberg den 5 ten November 1875

An

Großherzogliches Landgericht Friedberg

gehorsamster Bericht

des Großherzoglichen Ortsgerichts Friedberg.

Betreff: Ableben des Hirsch Groedel

Bezüglich des anbei erörterten Todesfalls beantworte ich folgende Fragen:

1) Der Vor- und Zunamen des Verstorbenen ist Hirsch Groedel

2) Wann er war geboren? Am 5 Juni 1815

3) In welchem Ort? Zu Friedberg

4) Wo wohnte er zur Zeit seines Ablebens? Zu Friedberg

5) Wann (an welchem Tag, Monat und Jahr) starb er? Am 3 November 1875

6) Was war die Ursache seines Todes? Krankheit

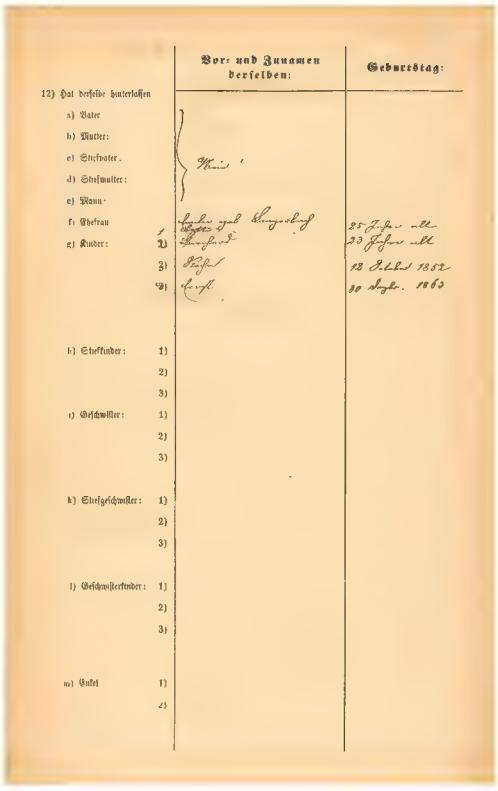
7) Hat er sich bis zu seinem Ableben dros temporär oder seit wann und bei wem als Dienstbote, Besuch rc. aufgehalten? Hat sein ganzes

8) Oder war er als Ortsbürger receptirt, wo und seit wann? Seit 10 Juni 1879

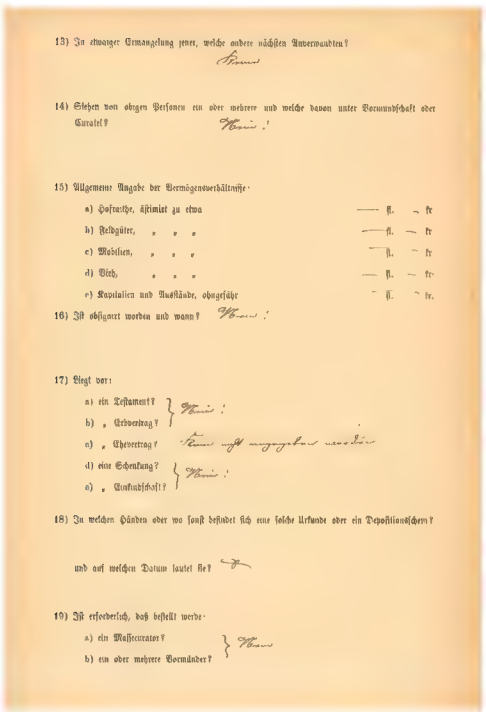
9) War er noch ledig? Ist Wittwer

10) Oder ein- oder schon mehrmals verheirathet? Ist Einmal

11) War derselbe Vormund oder sonst gerichtlich bestellter Curator gewesen und über wen? Keine.



	Vor- und Zunamen derselben:	Geburtstag:
12) Hat derselbe hinterlassen		
a) Vater		
b) Mutter:		
c) Stiefvater.	Keine.	
d) Stiefmutter:		
e) Mann-		
f. Ehefrau	Esther Groedel Langenbach	25 Jahre alt
g) Kinder: 1)	Hirsch Groedel	33 Jahre alt
2)	Bertha	13 Jahre 1862
3)	Jacob	10 Jahre. 1865
h) Stiefkinder: 1)		
2)		
3)		
i) Geschwister: 1)		
2)		
3)		
k) Stiefgeschwister: 1)		
2)		
3)		
l) Geschwisterkinder: 1)		
2)		
3)		
m) Eltern 1)		
2)		



13) In etwaiger Ermangelung jener, welche andere nächsten Anverwandten? Keine

14) Stehen von obigen Personen ein oder mehrere und welche davon unter Vormundschaft oder Curatel? Keine.

15) Allgemeine Angabe der Vermögensverhältnisse.

a) Hofraithe, äßimirt zu etwa —— fl. — kr

b) Feldgüter, „ „ „ —— fl. — kr

c) Mobilien, „ „ „ —— fl. — kr

d) Vieh, „ „ „ —— fl. — kr.

e) Kapitalien und Ausstände, obngefähr — fl. — kr.

16) Ist obsignirt worden und wann? Keine.

17) Liegt vor:

a) ein Testament? } Keine.

b) „ Erbvertrag? }

c) „ Ehevertrag? Keine mir angegeben worden

d) eine Schenkung? } Keine.

e) „ Cinkindschaft? }

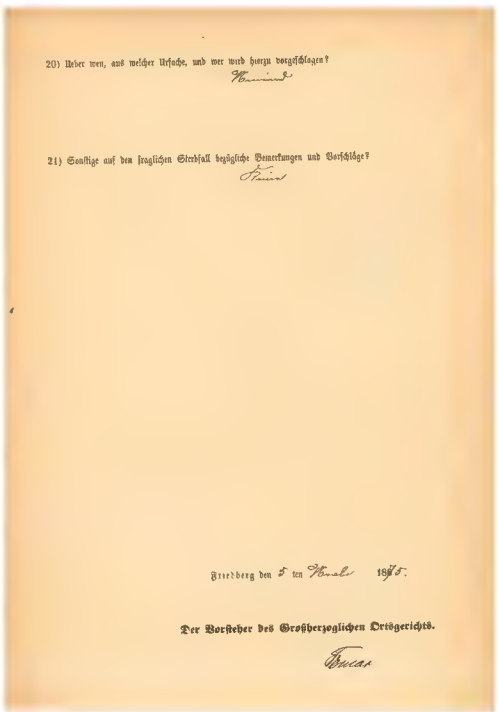
18) In welchen Händen oder wo sonst befindet sich eine solche Urkunde oder ein Depositionsschein?

und auf welchen Datum lautet sie?

19) Ist erforderlich, daß bestellt werde.

a) ein Massecurator? } Keine

b) ein oder mehrere Vormünder?



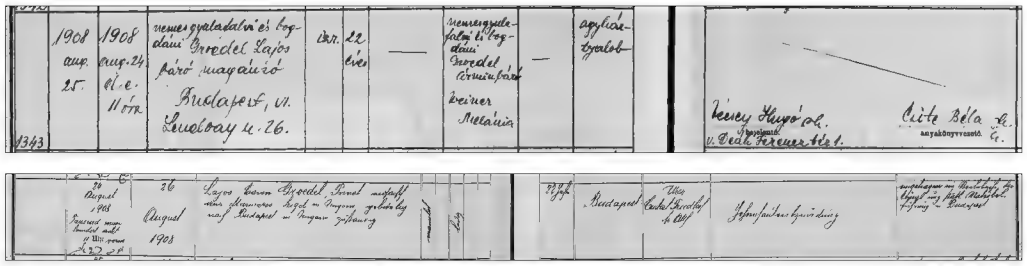
20) Ueber wen, aus welcher Ursache, und wer wird hierzu vorgeschlagen? Keine.

21) Sonstige auf den fraglichen Sterbfall bezügliche Bemerkungen und Vorschläge? Keine

Friedberg den 5 ten November 1875.

Der Vorsteher des Großherzoglichen Ortsgerichts.

Lucas



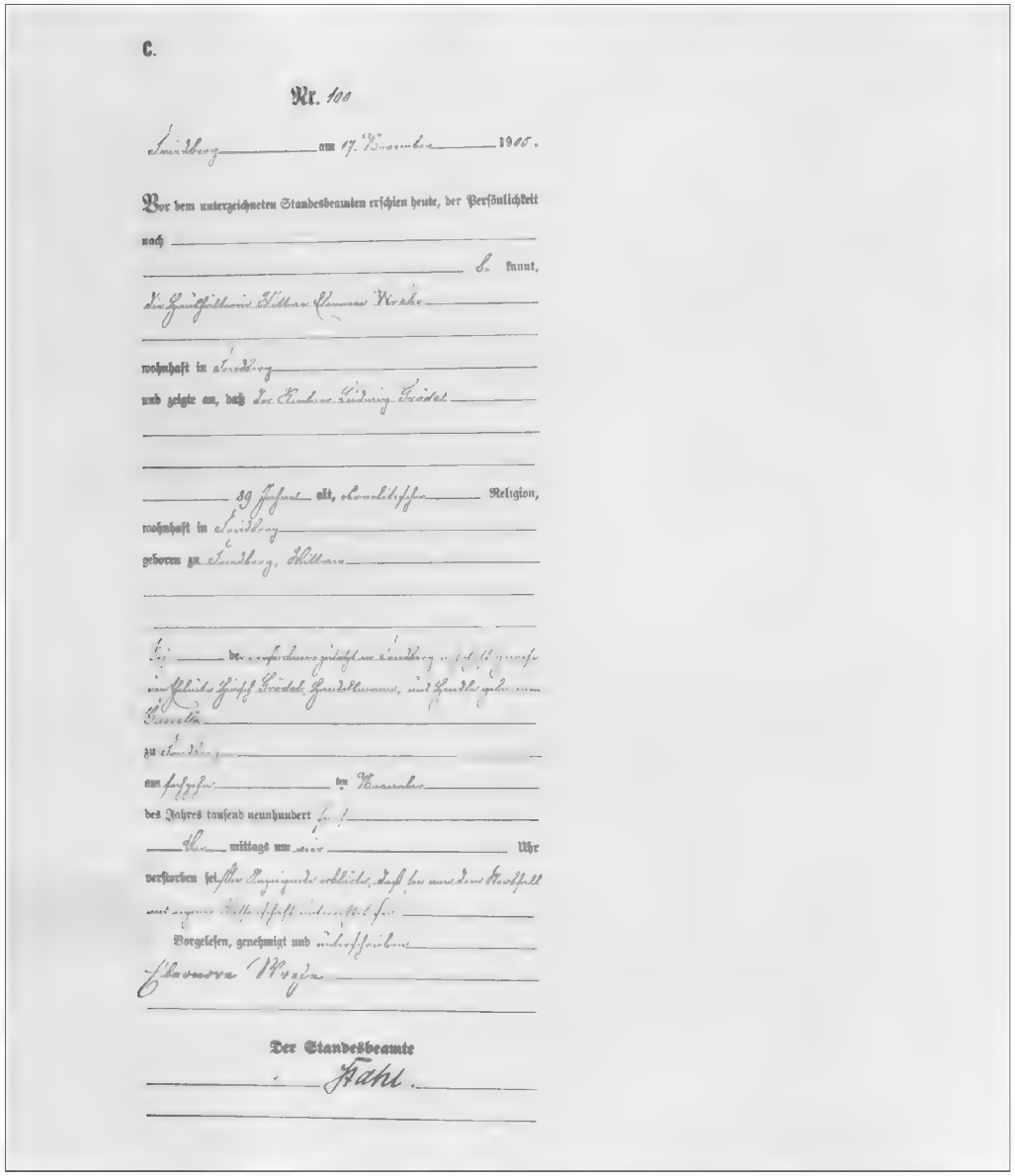
1908 aug. 25. | 1908 aug. 24 de. 11 ór. | Groedel Lajos | izr. | 22 éves | — | Groedel Lajos | — | agglicsi-izraelita | Lechner Gyula | Dr. Deák Ferenc utca 4.

1343

24 August 1908 | 26 August 1908 | Lajos Groedel | Budapest | Utca Erzsébet körút 6 | Izraelita hitközség

Lajos Groedel,

1908 (Lajos is buried in the grave with Zadig)



C.

Nr. 100

Landsberg am 17. November 1905.

Vor dem unterzeichneten Standesbeamten erschien heute, der Persönlichkeit nach _____ bekannt,

der Handelsmann Wilhelm Hermann Krake

wohnhaft in Landsberg

und zeigte an, daß der Kaufmann Ludwig Groedel

49 Jahre alt, mosaischer Religion,

wohnhaft in Landsberg

geboren zu Landsberg, Wilhelmstr.

hier

am fünfzehnten

des Jahres tausend neunhundert fünf

Uhr mittags um zwölf Uhr

verstorben sei. Der Anzeigende erklärte, daß er mit dem Verstorbenen

Vorgelesen, genehmigt und unterschrieben

Hermann Krake

Der Standesbeamte

Fahl.

Ludwig/Lob Groedel

Arthur Groedel

In tiefster Trauer geben wir bekannt, dass unser lieber Freund und tapferer Kamerad

Arthur Freiherr v. Groedel

Leutnant i. d. Res., Besitzer des österr. goldenen Verdienstkreuzes am Bande der Tapferkeitsmedaille, Besitzer der silbernen Tapferkeitsmedaille I. Kl., Ritter des Eisernen Kreuzes II. Kl., Besitzer der kaiserl. osman. silbernen Liakatmedaille und des Eisernen Halbmondes etc.

am 5. Juli 1917 nach kurzem, schwerem Leiden, fern der Heimat, den Kriegsstrapazen erlegen ist.

K. u. k. schwere Haubitz-Batterie Nr. 36.

Hermann Groedel

Death Record, 1930

Nr. 28788 Wien, Dienstag Neue Freie Presse

Statt jeder besonderen Anzeige.

Baronin Melanie Groedel geb. **Weiner** gibt im eigenen Namen sowie im Namen ihrer Söhne **Baron Otto Groedel, Baron Richard Groedel, Baron Albert Groedel,** ihrer Töchter **Paula Lónyay von Vásárosnamény und Nagylónya, Baronin Stefanie Königswarter, Frau Irene Sváb** und im Namen sämtlicher anderen Verwandten schmerzerfüllt Nachricht vom Ableben ihres innigstgeliebten Gatten

Baron Hermann Groedel

der am 28. November 1930 im 75. Lebensjahre in Budapest sanft entschlafen ist.

Die sterblichen Ueberreste des teuren Verblichenen wurden nach Wien überführt und dort, seinem Wunsche entsprechend, in aller Stille in der Familiengruft auf dem Zentralfriedhofe beigesetzt.

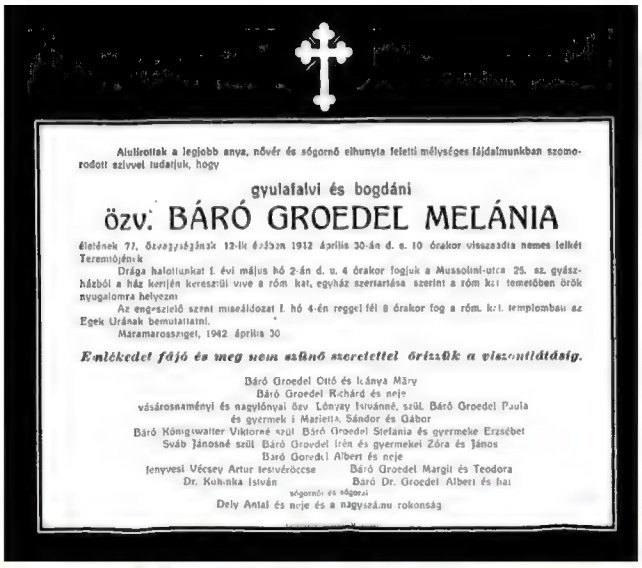
Es wird gebeten, von Kondolenzbesuchen Abstand zu nehmen.

Baron Groedel, Wealthy Hungarian Jew, Dead

(Jewish Telegraphic Agency)

Budapest, Dec. 1—Baron Hermann Groedel, a member of one of the most prominent Jewish families in Hungary, died here today at the age of 75. Known as one of the wealthiest members of the pre-war Jewish aristocracy in the late Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Baron was famous for his liberal philanthropies to various Jewish causes. The large timber enterprises which he operated employed many thousands of people.

Melanie Weiner Groedel



Alulírottak a legjobb anya, nővér és sógornő elhunyta feletti mélységes fájdalmunkban szomorodott szívvel tudatjuk, hogy

gyulafalvi és bogdáni

özv. BÁRÓ GROEDEL MELÁNIA

életének 77. évében 12-ik órában 1942 április 30-án d. e. 10 órakor visszaadta nemes lelkét Teremtőjének.

Drága halottunkat f. évi május hó 2-án d. u. 4 órakor fogjuk a Mussolini-utca 25. sz. gyászházból a ház kerítésén keresztül vive a róm. kat. egyház szertartása szerint a róm. kat. temetőben örök nyugalomra helyezni.

Az eng-szerető szent miseáldozat f. hó 4-én reggel fél 8 órakor fog a róm. kat. templomban az Egek Urának bemutattatni.

Máramarossziget, 1942 április 30.

Emlékedet fájó és meg nem szűnő szeretettel őrizzük a viszontlátásig.

Báró Groedel Ottó és leánya Märy
Báró Groedel Richárd és neje
vásárosnaményi és nagylónyai özv. Lónyay Istvánné, szül. Báró Groedel Paula
és gyermek i Marietta, Sándor és Gábor
Báró Königswarter Viktorné szül. Báró Groedel Stefania és gyermeke Erzsébet
Sváb Jánosné szül. Báró Groedel Irén és gyermekei Zóra és János
Báró Goredel Albert és neje
fenyvesi Vécsey Artur testvéröccse
Báró Groedel Margit és Teodora
Dr. Kuhinka István
Báró Dr. Groedel Albert és hat
sógornői és sógorai
Dely Antal és neje és a nagyszámu rokonság

Fájdalomtól megtört szívvel tudatjuk, hogy szeretett Édesanyánk, testvérünk, sógornőnk, anyósunk, nagyanyánk

ÖZV. GYULAFALVI és BOGDÁNI

báró GROEDEL HERMANNÉ

április 30-án Máramarossziget en életének 77. évében hirtelen elhunyt.

Temetése május 2-án, szombaton délután 4 órakor lesz a máramarossziget i róm. kat. temetőben.

báró Groedel Ottó
báró Groedel Richárd
báró Groedel Albert
fiai

özv. Lónyay Istvánné
szül. **báró Groedel Paula**
báró Königswarter Viktorné
szül. **báró Groedel Stefánia**
Sváb Jánosné
szül. **báró Groedel Irén**
leányai

báró Groedel Richárdné
báró Groedel Albertné
menyei

báró Königswarter Viktor
veje

dr. báró Groedel Albert és neje
sógora és sógornője

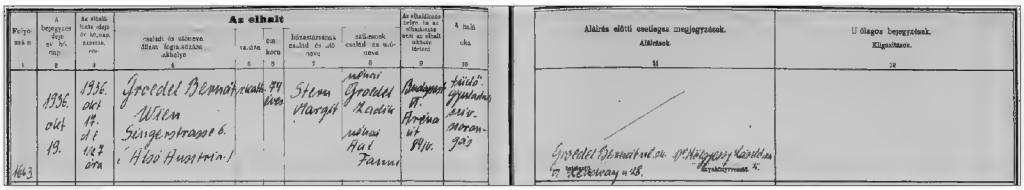
özv. báró Groedel Bernátné
sógornője

fenyvesi Vécsey Artúr
öccse

Lónyay Gábor
Lónyay Sándor
Sváb János
Kussewich Zora
báró Königswarter Elisabeth
dr. Kuhinka Istvánné
báró Groedel Märy
unokai

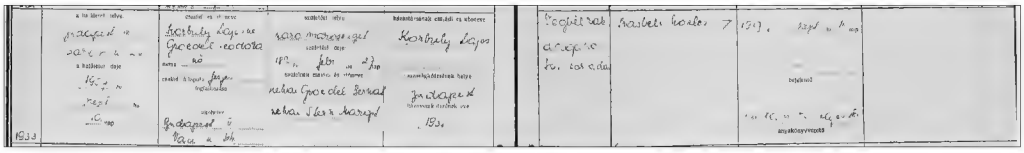
Bernhard Groedel

Death Record, 1936



Theodora Groedel Korbuly

Death Record. 1957



Theodora Groedel Korbuly

Death Notice, 1957

Korbuly Lajos férje és **Korbuly Péter** sógora, valamint összes rokonsága mély fájdalommal tudatják, hogy a legjobb, drága, felejthetetlen feleség, sógornő és rokon

Korbuly Lajosné

szül. GROEDEL THEODORA

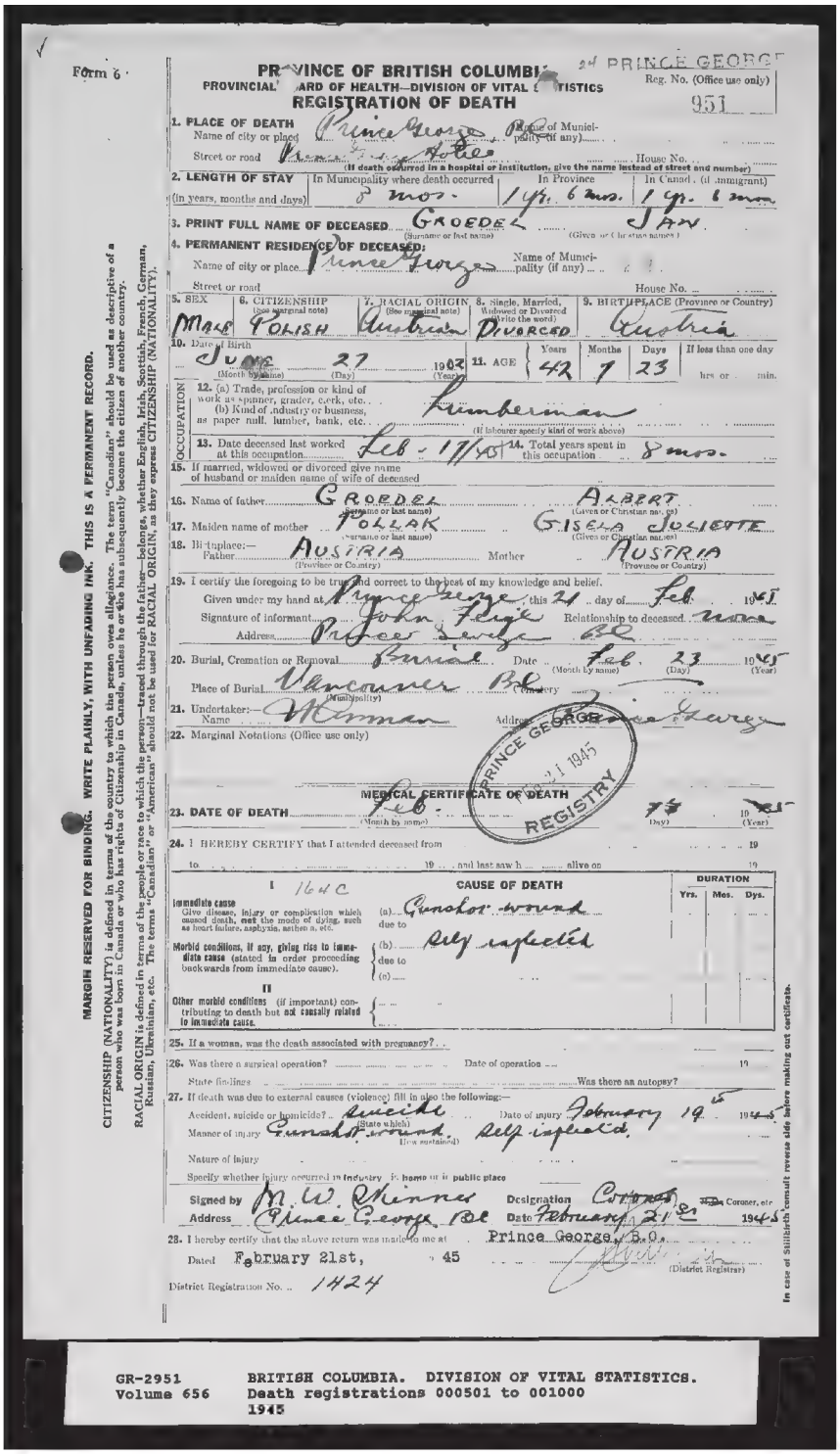
1957. szeptember 10-én este ½9 órakor, hosszabb szenvedés után elhunyt.

Drága halottunkat szeptember hó 16-án, délután 3 órakor a **Kerepesi-úti temető halottasházából** fogjuk a róm. kat. egyház szertartása szerint örök nyugalomra helyezni.

Az elhunyt lelki üdvéért az engesztelő szentmisét szeptember hó 18-án, délelőtt 11 órakor a Ferenciek templomában, V., Ferenciek-tere fogjuk bemutattatni.

Budapest, 1957. szeptember 12.

EMLÉKE ÖRÖKKÉ ELNI FOG!



Form 6

PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA — 2nd PRINCE GEORGE
PROVINCIAL BOARD OF HEALTH—DIVISION OF VITAL STATISTICS
REGISTRATION OF DEATH
Reg. No. (Office use only) 951

MARGIN RESERVED FOR BINDING. WRITE PLAINLY, WITH UNFADING INK. THIS IS A PERMANENT RECORD.

CITIZENSHIP (NATIONALITY) is defined in terms of the country to which the person owes allegiance. The term "Canadian" should be used as descriptive of a person who was born in Canada or who has rights of Citizenship in Canada, unless he or she has subsequently become the citizen of another country.

RACIAL ORIGIN is defined in terms of the people or race to which the person—traced through the father—belongs, whether English, Irish, Scottish, French, German, Russian, Ukrainian, etc. The terms "Canadian" or "American" should not be used for RACIAL ORIGIN, as they express CITIZENSHIP (NATIONALITY).

1. PLACE OF DEATH — Name of city or place: Prince George — Name of Municipality (if any): — Street or road: Hospital — House No. — (If death occurred in a hospital or institution, give the name instead of street and number)

2. LENGTH OF STAY (in years, months and days) — In Municipality where death occurred: 8 mos. — In Province: 14 yr. 6 mos. — In Canada (if immigrant): 14 yr. 6 mos.

3. PRINT FULL NAME OF DECEASED — GROEDEL (Surname or last name) — JAN. (Given or Christian names)

4. PERMANENT RESIDENCE OF DECEASED: Name of city or place: Prince George — Name of Municipality (if any): — Street or road: — House No.

5. SEX: Male — 6. CITIZENSHIP (See marginal note): Polish — 7. RACIAL ORIGIN (See marginal note): Austrian — 8. Single, Married, Widowed or Divorced (Write the word): Divorced — 9. BIRTHPLACE (Province or Country): Austria

10. Date of Birth: June 27 (Month by name) (Day) 1902 (Year) — 11. AGE: Years 42 — Months 7 — Days 23 — If less than one day: hrs. or min.

OCCUPATION
12. (a) Trade, profession or kind of work as spinner, grader, clerk, etc.: Lumberman — (b) Kind of industry or business, as paper mill, lumber, bank, etc. — (If labourer specify kind of work above)
13. Date deceased last worked at this occupation: Feb - 17/45 — 14. Total years spent in this occupation: 8 mos.

15. If married, widowed or divorced give name of husband or maiden name of wife of deceased:
16. Name of father: GROEDEL (Surname or last name) — ALBERT (Given or Christian names)
17. Maiden name of mother: POLLAK (Surname or last name) — GISELA JOSIETTE (Given or Christian names)
18. Birthplace:— Father: AUSTRIA (Province or Country) — Mother: AUSTRIA (Province or Country)

19. I certify the foregoing to be true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.
Given under my hand at Prince George this 21 day of Feb. 1945
Signature of informant: John Feigl — Relationship to deceased: none
Address: Prince George BC

20. Burial, Cremation or Removal: Burial — Date: Feb 23 (Month by name) (Day) 1945 (Year)
Place of Burial: Vancouver (Municipality) BC — Cemetery

21. Undertaker:— Name: Kinman — Address: Prince George

22. Marginal Notations (Office use only)

PRINCE GEORGE FEB 21 1945 REGISTRY

MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF DEATH

23. DATE OF DEATH: Feb. (Month by name) 17 (Day) 1945 (Year)

24. I HEREBY CERTIFY that I attended deceased from ... 19 ... to ... 19 ... and last saw h... alive on ... 19

I 164C — CAUSE OF DEATH — DURATION (Yrs. / Mos. / Dys.)

Immediate cause — Give disease, injury or complication which caused death, not the mode of dying, such as heart failure, asphyxia, anemia, etc.: (a) Gunshot wound — due to
Morbid conditions, if any, giving rise to immediate cause (stated in order preceding backwards from immediate cause): (b) Self inflicted — due to (c)

II
Other morbid conditions (if important) contributing to death but not causally related to immediate cause:

25. If a woman, was the death associated with pregnancy?
26. Was there a surgical operation? ... Date of operation ... 19 ... State findings ... Was there an autopsy?
27. If death was due to external causes (violence) fill in also the following:—
Accident, suicide or homicide? Suicide — Date of injury February 19 45
Manner of injury (State which) Gunshot wound. (How sustained) Self inflicted.
Nature of injury
Specify whether injury occurred in industry, in home or in public place
Signed by M. W. Kinman — Designation Coroner, etc. — Address Prince George, BC — Date February 21st 1945

28. I hereby certify that the above return was made to me at Prince George, B.C.
Dated February 21st, 45 (District Registrar)
District Registration No. 1424

In case of Stillbirth consult reverse side before making out certificate.

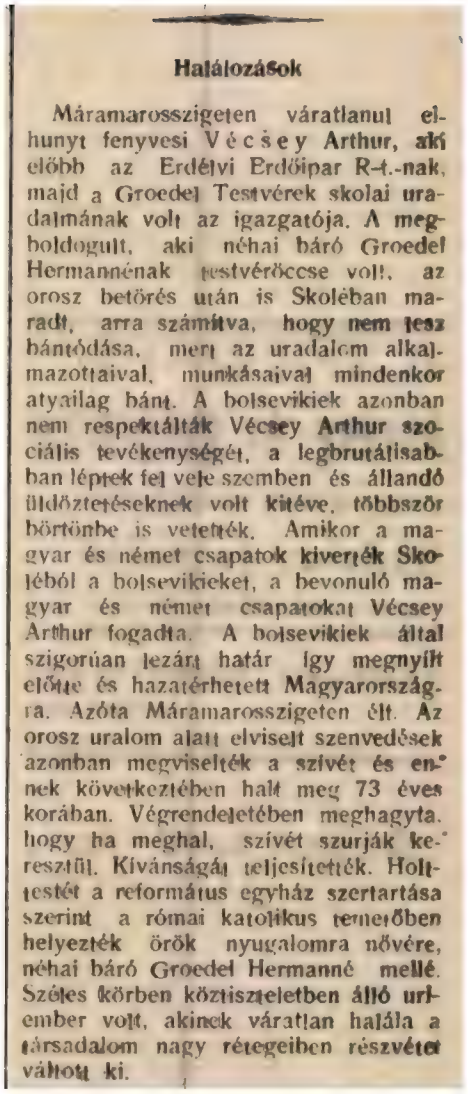
GR-2951 Volume 656 — BRITISH COLUMBIA. DIVISION OF VITAL STATISTICS. Death registrations 000501 to 001000 1945

Hans Groedel

Death Record, 1945

Arthur Weiner Vecsey:

February 20, 1944



Halálozások

Máramarosszigeten váratlanul elhunyt fenyvesi Vécsey Arthur, aki előbb az Erdélyi Erdőipar R.-t.-nak, majd a Groedel Testvérek skolai uradalmának volt az igazgatója. A megboldogult, aki néhai báró Groedel Hermannénak testvéröccse volt, az orosz betörés után is Skolében maradt, arra számítva, hogy nem lesz bántódása, mert az uradalom alkalmazottaival, munkásaival mindenkor atyailag bánt. A bolsevikiek azonban nem respektálták Vécsey Arthur szociális tevékenységét, a legbrutálisabban léptek fel vele szemben és állandó üldöztetéseknek volt kitéve, többször börtönbe is vetették. Amikor a magyar és német csapatok kiverték Skoléból a bolsevikieket, a bevonuló magyar és német csapatokat Vécsey Arthur fogadta. A bolsevikiek által szigorúan lezárt határ így megnyílt előtte és hazatérhetett Magyarországra. Azóta Máramarosszigeten élt. Az orosz uralom alatt elviselt szenvedések azonban megviselték a szívét és ennek következtében halt meg 73 éves korában. Végrendeletében meghagyta, hogy ha meghal, szívét szurják keresztül. Kívánságát teljesítették. Holttestét a református egyház szertartása szerint a római katolikus temetőben helyezték örök nyugalomra nővére, néhai báró Groedel Hermanné mellé. Széles körben köztiszteletben álló úriember volt, akinek váratlan halála a társadalom nagy rétegeiben részvétet váltott ki.

Deaths

Arthur Vécsey of Fenyves, who was first the director of Erdélyi Erdőipar Rt. and then of the Skole estate of the Groedel Brothers, died unexpectedly on Máramarossziget. The lucky man, who was the brother of the late Mrs. Baron Hermann Groedel, remained in Skolé even after the Russian invasion, expecting that he would not be hurt, because he always treated the employees and workers of the manor in a fatherly manner. However, the Bolsheviks did not respect Arthur Vécsey's social activities, they acted in the most brutal manner against him and he was subjected to constant persecution, and was even thrown into prison several times. When the Hungarian and German troops drove the Bolsheviks out of Skolé, the advancing Hungarian and German troops were received by Arthur Vécsey. The border, which was strictly closed by the Bolsheviks, was thus opened to him and he was able to return home to Hungary. Since then he lived in Máramarossziget. However, the sufferings he endured under Russian rule took a toll on his heart and as a result he died at the age of 73. In his will, he left that if he died, his heart would be pierced. His wish was granted. According to the rites of the Reform Church, his body was laid to rest in the Roman Catholic cemetery next to his sister, the late Baron Hermann Groedel's wife [Melanie -jz]. He was a widely respected gentleman whose unexpected death evoked sympathy from large sections of society.

Statt jeder besonderen Anzeige.

Tief erschüttert geben die Unterzeichneten hiemit Nachricht von dem Ableben der Frau

Jenny v. Vécsey geb. Stein

welche heute früh um 10 Uhr in der Blüte ihres Daseins nach langem schweren Leiden sanft verschieden ist.

Die irdische Hülle der teuren Verblichenen wird Sonntag den 1. März 1914 um 3 Uhr nachmittags im Hause: IX., Althanplatz 6, eingesegnet, sodann zur Einäscherung nach Dresden überführt und Dienstag den 3. März 1914 in der Familiengruft in Wien (Zentralfriedhof) zur ewigen Ruhe beigesetzt.

Wien — Budapest, 27. Februar 1914.

Ully Birnbaum geb. **Stein,** als Schwester. **Arthur v. Vécsey,** als Gatte. **Paul v. Vécsey,** als Sohn.
Doro, Maximilian und **Siegfried Stein,** als Brüder.
Adolf und **Regine Weiner,** als Schwiegereltern.
Baronin Melanie Gródel, Betty Stein, als Schwägerinnen. **László Birnbaum, Hugo Vécsey,** als Schwäger.
Sämtliche Nichten und Neffen.

Jenny Stein Vecsey:

February 27, 1914

László Vécsey, as the son of the deceased, with a heavy heart announces on his own behalf, as well as on behalf of his undersigned siblings and relatives, that their beloved father and relative,

Hugó Vécsey,
passed away on the 29th of this month at 1 PM, at the age of 51, after long suffering.
His funeral will take place on the 31st of this month at 4 PM from the mortuary of the Kerepesi Cemetery, according to the Roman Catholic rite, and he will be laid to eternal rest in the cemetery there.
The holy mass will be offered to the Almighty on June 1st at 10 AM in the Terézváros Parish Church.
Blessing and peace upon his ashes!
Baroness Meláni Groedel and Arthur Vécsey, siblings.

The undersigned sorrowfully announce that their beloved superior,
Mr. Hugó Vécsey,
managing partner of the firm **Weiner A. & Grünbaum M.,**
passed away on the 29th of this month after prolonged suffering.
He showed us goodwill, respect, and kindness; we deeply feel the great loss that has befallen us and will cherish his memory with reverence.
The staff of the firm **Weiner A. & Grünbaum M.**

Vécsey László, mint az elhunyt fia úgy a maga, valamint elhunyt testvérei és rokonai nevében fájdalmas szívvel tudatja, hogy szeretett jó apja és rokon

Vécsey Hugó

folyó hó 29-én déli 1 órakor, életének 51-ik évében hosszas szenvedés után elhunyt.

Temetése folyó hó 31-én d. u. 4 órakor lesz a kerepesi temetői halottasházból a rom. kath. egyház szertartása szerint és az ottani temetőben örök nyugalomra helyeztetik.

A szent mise áldozat június 1-én d. e. 10 órakor lesz a Mindenhatónak bemutatva a terézvárosi plébánia templomban.

Áldás és béke porai felett!

Groedel Melánі báróné és **Vécsey Arthur** testvérek.

Alulírottak fájdalmasan jelentik, hogy szeretett főnökük

Vécsey Hugó úr

a Weiner A. és Grünbaum M. cég beltagja hosszabb szenvedés után f. hó 29-én elhunyt.

Jóakaratot, tiszteletet és szeretetet tanúsított irántunk: őszinte részvétünket és emlékét kegyelettel fogjuk megőrizni.

Weiner A. és Grünbaum M. cég személyzete.

Hugo Weiner:

May 29, 1920

Adolf Weiner:

May 10, 1918

Statt jeder besonderen Meldung.

Frau Witwe Adolf Weiner gibt in ihrem eigenen und im Namen ihrer Kinder **Hugo Vécsei, Arthur v. Vécsey** und **Baronin Hermann Groedel** sowie namens ihrer Enkel und Urenkel und der gesamten Verwandtschaft schmerzerfüllt Kenntniss von dem Ableben ihres innigstgeliebten teuren Gatten, des Herrn

Adolf Weiner

der am 10. Mai, an seinem vierundachtzigsten Geburtstage, nach vierundfünfzigjähriger glücklichster Ehe und nach längerem, mit grosser Geduld ertragenen Leiden sanft entschlafen ist. Das gütigste Familienoberhaupt, der zärtlichste Verwandte und das Vorbild treuester Pflichterfüllung geht mit ihm dahin.

Unseren teuren Toten geleiten wir am **Sonntag, den 12. Mai, vormittags halb 12 Uhr** von der Leichenhalle des Rákoskereszturer Friedhofes zur ewigen Ruhe. 4565

Kranzspenden dankend verbeten.

A **Weiner A. és Grünbaum M.** cég személyzete mély megilletődéssel jelenti, hogy szeretett főnöke

Weiner Adolf

úr

folyó hó 10-én jobblétre szenderült.

Az elhunytban atyailag gondoskodó főnökünket gyászoljuk, ki nemes gondolkozásával, puritán jellemével mindnyájunk szeretetét és nagyrabecsülését bírta.

Emlékét mindenkoron kegyelettel fogjuk megőrizni. 4556

Instead of any special message
The. widow of Adolf Weiner on her own behalf and in the name of her children Hugo Vecsei, Arthur v. Vécsey and Baroness Hermann Groedel, as well as her grandson and great-grandson, and their entire family, are filled with knowledge of the death of their most dearly beloved husband, Mr. ADOLF WEINER, on May 10, at his eighty-fourth birthday, after forty-four years of the happiest marriage, and after a long time with great patience suffering has gently fallen asleep. The kindest head of the family, the most tender relatives and the model of the most faithful fulfillment of duties go with him.

On 12th May, we will escort our dear dead to the eternal rest from the morgue of the Rakoskereszterk Cemetery on Sunday, 12th May.

Thanking wreath donations thankfully."

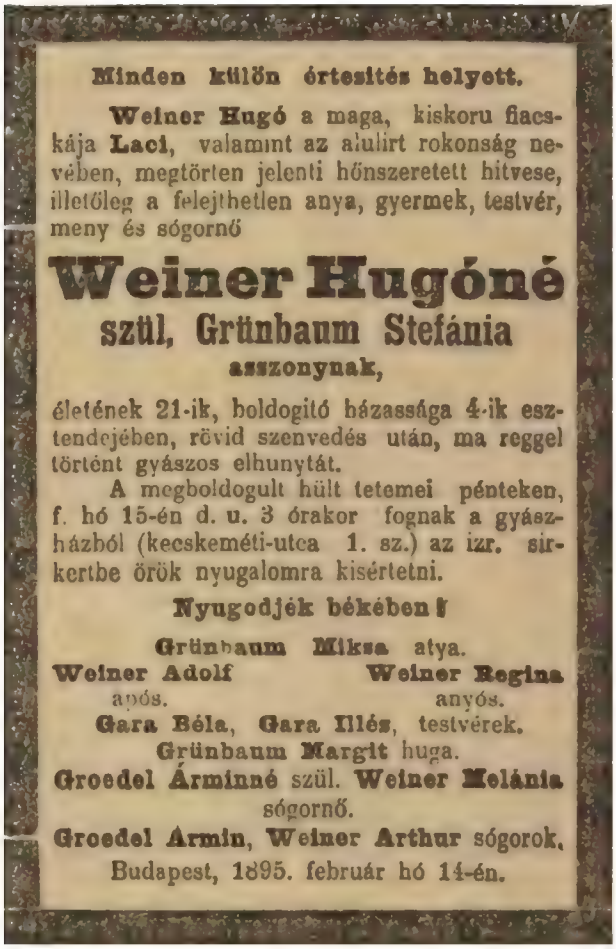
It is with deep sadness that the staff of Weiner A. & Grünbaum M. reports that their beloved boss

Mr. Adolf Weiner

passed away on the 10th of this month.

We mourn the passing of our paternally caring boss, who, with his noble thinking and puritan character, was loved and esteemed by us all.

Our memories will always be cherished with affection.



Minden külön értesítés helyett.

Weiner Hugó a maga, kiskoru fiacskája **Laci**, valamint az alulirt rokonság nevében, megtörten jelenti hőnszeretett hitvese, illetőleg a felejthetlen anya, gyermek, testvér, meny és sógornő

Weiner Hugóné

szül. Grünbaum Stefánia

asszonynak,

életének 21-ik, boldogitó házassága 4-ik esztendejében, rövid szenvedés után, ma reggel történt gyászos elhunytát.

A megboldogult hült tetemei pénteken, f. hó 15-én d. u. 3 órakor fognak a gyászházból (kecskeméti-utca 1. sz.) az izr. sirkertbe örök nyugalomra kisértetni.

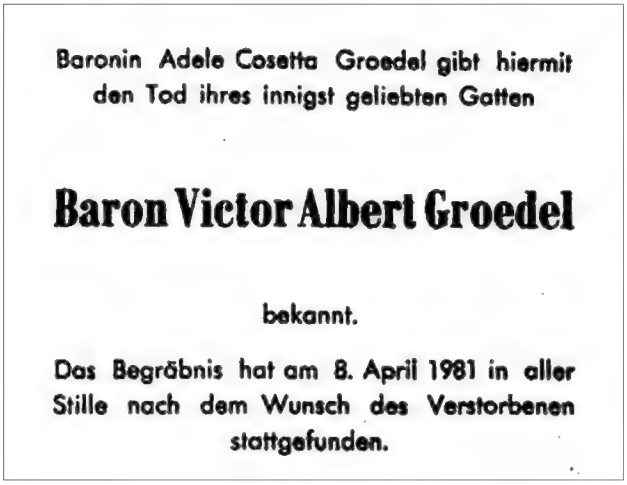
Nyugodjék békében!

Grünbaum Miksa atya.
Weiner Adolf após. **Weiner Regina** anyós.
Gara Béla, **Gara Illés**, testvérek.
Grünbaum Margit huga.
Groedel Árminné szül. **Weiner Melánia** sógornő.
Groedel Armin, **Weiner Arthur** sógorok.

Budapest, 1895. február hó 14-én.

Stefania Grunbaum Weiner:

February 14, 1895



Baronin Adele Cosetta Groedel gibt hiermit den Tod ihres innigst geliebten Gatten

Baron Victor Albert Groedel

bekannt.

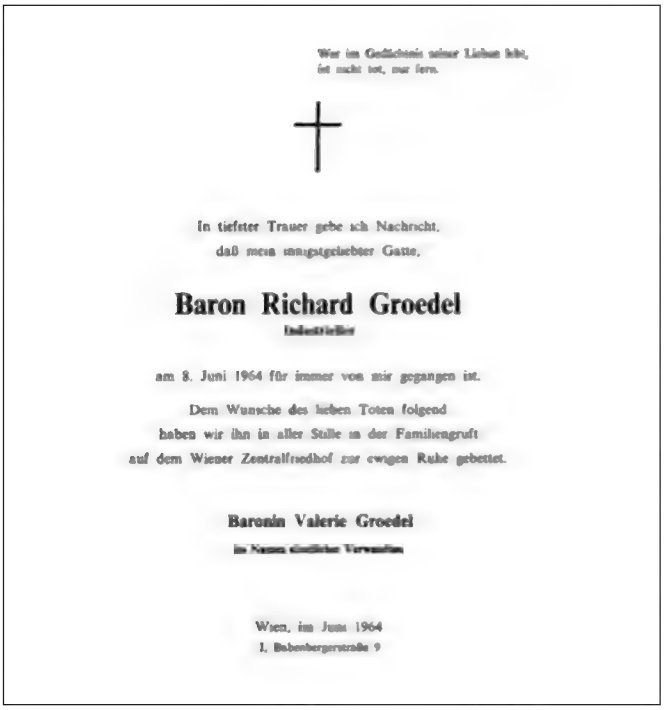
Das Begräbnis hat am 8. April 1981 in aller Stille nach dem Wunsch des Verstorbenen stattgefunden.

Victor Albert Groedel:

April 8, 1981

Richard Groedel:

June 1964



Wer im Gedächtnis seiner Lieben lebt,
ist nicht tot, nur fern.

In tiefster Trauer gebe ich Nachricht,
daß mein unvergeßlicher Gatte,

Baron Richard Groedel
Industrieller

am 8. Juni 1964 für immer von mir gegangen ist.

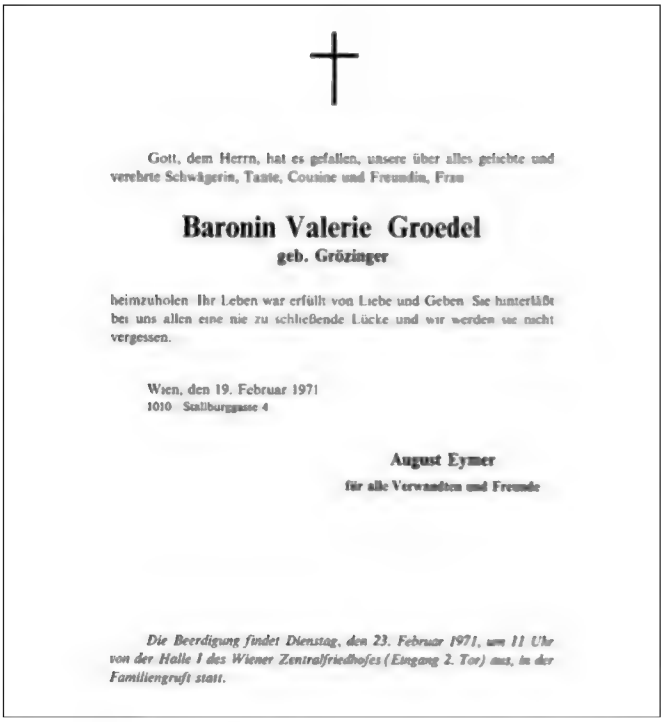
Dem Wunsche des lieben Toten folgend
haben wir ihn in aller Stille in der Familiengruft
auf dem Wiener Zentralfriedhof zur ewigen Ruhe gebettet.

Baronin Valerie Groedel
in Namen trauernder Verwandten

Wien, im Juni 1964
I, Babenbergerstraße 9

Valerie Grotzinger Groedel:

February 19, 1971



Gott, dem Herrn, hat es gefallen, unsere über alles geliebte und verehrte Schwägerin, Tante, Cousine und Freundin, Frau

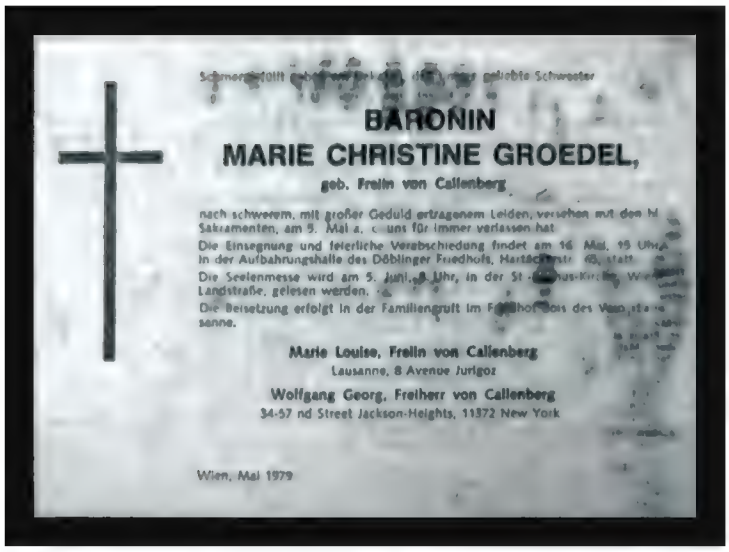
Baronin Valerie Groedel
geb. Grözinger

heimzuholen. Ihr Leben war erfüllt von Liebe und Geben. Sie hinterläßt bei uns allen eine nie zu schließende Lücke und wir werden sie nicht vergessen.

Wien, den 19. Februar 1971
1010 Stallburggasse 4

August Eymer
für alle Verwandten und Freunde

Die Beerdigung findet Dienstag, den 23. Februar 1971, um 11 Uhr von der Halle I des Wiener Zentralfriedhofes (Eingang 2. Tor) aus, in der Familiengruft statt.



BARONIN
MARIE CHRISTINE GROEDEL,
geb. Freiin von Callenberg

nach schwerem, mit großer Geduld ertragenem Leiden, versehen mit den hl. Sakramenten, am 9. Mai a. c. uns für immer verlassen hat.

Die Einsegnung und feierliche Verabschiedung findet am 16. Mai, 15 Uhr, in der Aufbahrungshalle des Döblinger Friedhofs, Hartäckerstr. 40, statt.

Die Seelenmesse wird am 5. Juni, 8 Uhr, in der St. [illegible]-Kirche, Wien, Landstraße, gelesen werden.

Die Beisetzung erfolgt in der Familiengruft im Friedhof [illegible] des Vaters stattfinden.

Marie Louise, Freiin von Callenberg
Lausanne, 8 Avenue Jurigoz

Wolfgang Georg, Freiherr von Callenberg
34-57 nd Street Jackson-Heights, 11372 New York

Wien, Mai 1979

Marie Christine von Callenberg

Dr. Hilb Jenőné felesége, Hilb János, Hilb Ferenc és neje, gyermekei, Ferenc és István unokái a maguk, valamint az egész gyászoló rokonság nevében mély fájdalommal jelentik, hogy szerető férje, a legjobb apa, nagyapa és rokon

dr. Hilb Jenő

a Fabank v. elnöke
és a br. Groedel-vállalatok v. vezérigazgatója

65 éves korában rövid szenvedés után október 2-án váratlanul elhunyt.

Temetése 1943 október 5-én, kedden délután fél 4 órakor lesz a farkasréti temetőben a református egyház szertartása szerint.

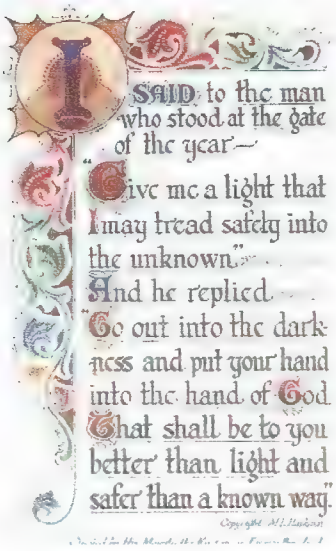
4363

Dr. Jeno Hilb

Stefie (Groedel), Viktor and Vera Koenigswarter

BARONESS
VERA ELISABETH KOENIGSWARTER

15 April 1923 ~ 28 September 2006


I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year—
"Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown."
And he replied
"Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the hand of God
That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way."

Dear Friends of Vera,

May I share with you the service we held for Vera at the Northern Suburbs Crematorium and may you join me in a chance to reflect upon the times and the friendship we shared with Vera.

A long journey, of which I only shared the last 12 years, has come to its conclusion.

I got to meet Vera when I was employed to cook European meals for her partner Les Vitek and as Les and I became friends, and as he was aware that his trip was coming to an end, he requested that I should keep an eye on Vera for him, and so I did. Vera and I have long since become close friends, but I also still have fond memories of Les.

Vera, or Bibette, as she was called by all the people that loved her, was born in 1923 as the only daughter of Victor and Steffi Koenigswarter. Her very sheltered and privileged upbringing in Vienna came to an abrupt ending when Hitler's SS arrived at Vera's parents flat only three days after Hitler had occupied Vienna. On that occasion her father managed to escape the flat through the window, but the family knew they had to leave Vienna and Hitler's territory immediately.

Vera was whisked away with a group of young people on their way to a holiday in Switzerland, hoping she was not detected as not really belonging to the group and not knowing if her parents would be able to follow. They managed to actually leave Austria on a plane and with dignity, as one old letter of correspondence tells. In Switzerland they educated themselves learning how to run a hotel and

eventually, in 1939 the family embarked on their journey to Australia. That boat trip, I would imagine, was the end of Vera's Austrian privileged past.

Vera, or her family as Vera told me often, never complained. Vera learned secretarial skills and soon found a range of employment, but the highlight of her professional life was her time as presenter at the ABC in the program "Happy to know you". She also researched other programs and successfully submitted them to the ABC for presentation. She remained with the ABC until she retired.

Vera also was the research assistant to Vivian Stuart, Justice Kim Santow's mother, for the Australian content of her novels. From this a lasting friendship with the family ensued and when Justice Santow heard that Vera had passed away his comment was how admirably Vera adjusted to her life in Australia without complaint, just getting on with life.

Vera's first trip to Europe, as far as I know, was only in the early seventies. But before that trip, suitcases full of correspondence are witness to the struggle of Vera's family to regain some of the lost possessions, almost completely unsuccessful.

Vera's correspondence is also witness to the huge circle of friends Vera kept in contact with. Most important to her was to keep in contact with her cousins Zora, Pipsi and Sandor on her mother's side and Shaun de Koenigswarter on her father's side. She also never lost contact with her school friends of that long ago era when she went to High School (Gymnasium) in Austria.

The last two years, spent at Amity Grand at Mosman have been a struggle, made harder by the fact that Vera was profoundly deaf. From my many conversations with Vera over time, I know that Vera was ready to go, and I also know that I am missing her. Rest in peace.

God hath not promised skies always blue,
Flower strewn pathways All our lives through,
God hat not promised Sun without rain,
Joy without sorrow, Peace without pain.

But God hath promised Strength for the day,
Rest for the labor, Light for the way,
Grace for the trials, Help from above,
Unfailing sympathy, Undying love.

With love Rosa Maria Riedl
Vera's friend

In a book titled "Three Portraits: Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin" written by the German author, Emil Ludwig, in 1940, he claims that at one time before his rise to power, Hitler *"lived in free boarding and lodging shelters subsidized by Jewish Baron Koenigswarter."*

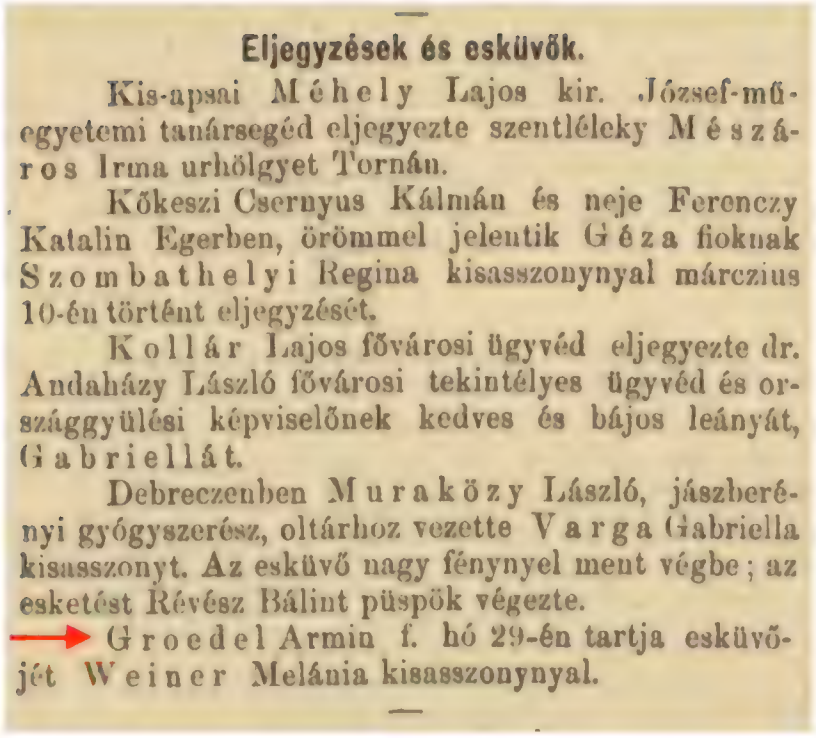
For the next four years, the best training period for a young man with a goal in the world, Hitler lived, aimless and idle, on the charity of rich, mostly Jewish organizations, -first in an institution for the homeless, then in a Men's Home. That was in 1910, when there was no unemployment problem. ... He got his meals in the soup kitchens for the poor, provided by the Jewish Baron Königswarter[131].

[131] *This was possibly Victor's father, Baron Moritz Johann Koenigswarter.*

Marriage Records

Hermann Groedel and Melanie Weiner:

March 26, 1885



Eljegyzések és esküvők.

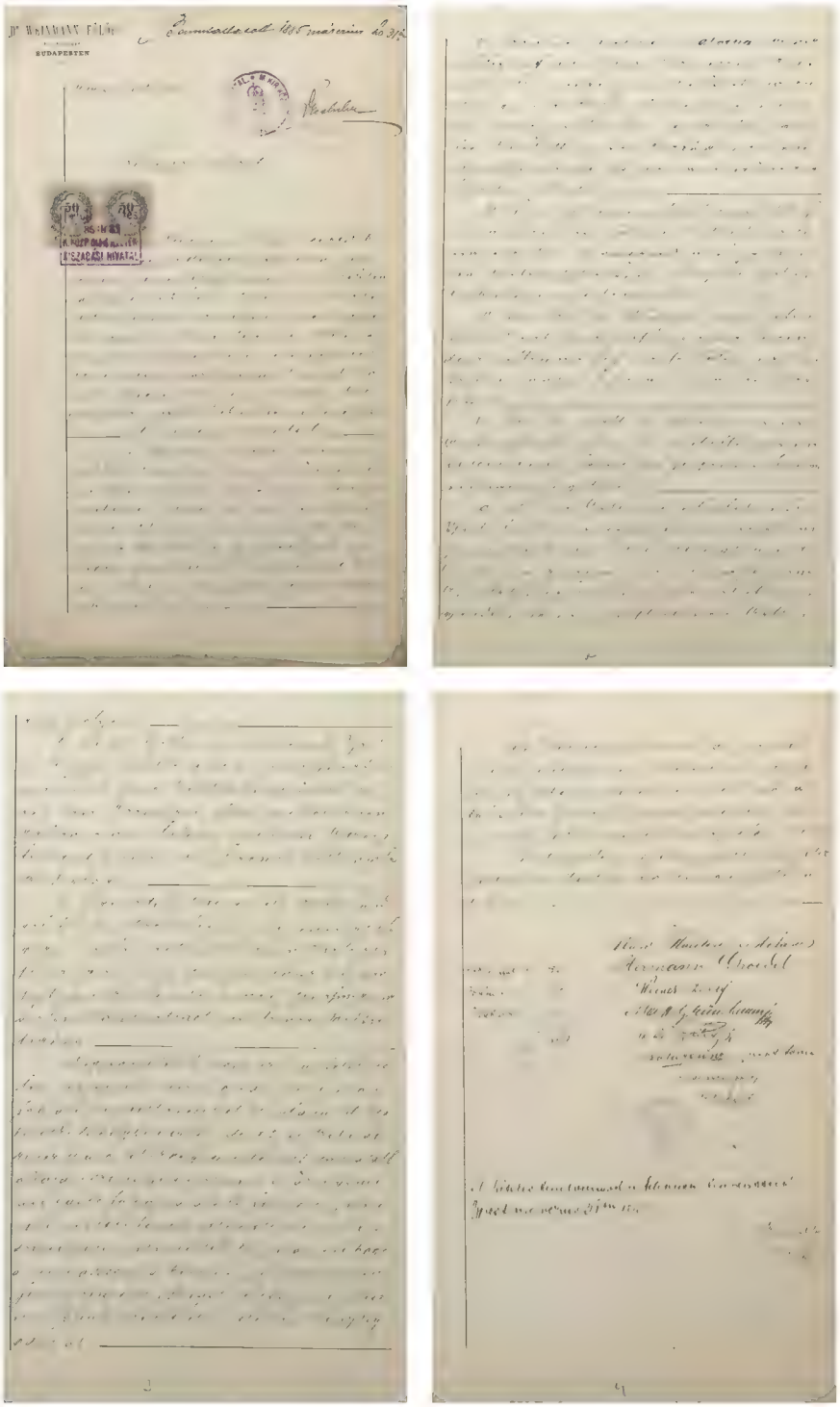
Kis-apsai Méhely Lajos kir. József-műegyetemi tanársegéd eljegyezte szentléleky Mészáros Irma urhölgyet Tornán.

Kőkeszi Csernyus Kálmán és neje Ferenczy Katalin Egerben, örömmel jelentik Géza fiuknak Szombathelyi Regina kisasszonynyal március 10-én történt eljegyzését.

Kollár Lajos fővárosi ügyvéd eljegyezte dr. Andaházy László fővárosi tekintélyes ügyvéd és országgyülési képviselőnek kedves és bájos leányát, Gabriellát.

Debreczenben Muraközy László, jászberényi gyógyszerész, oltárhoz vezette Varga Gabriella kisasszonyt. Az esküvő nagy fénynyel ment végbe; az esketést Révész Bálint püspök végezte.

→ Groedel Armin f. hó 29-én tartja esküvőjét Weiner Melánia kisasszonynyal.

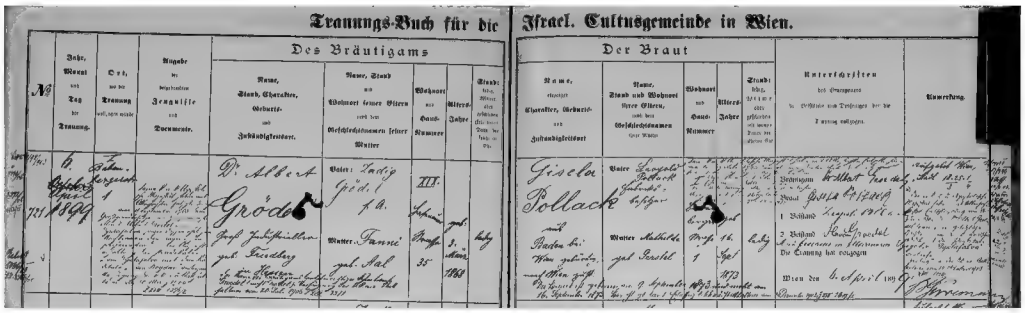


Hermann and Melanie's Pre-nup

(Hungarian)

Albert Groedel and Gisela Pollak:

April 6, 1899

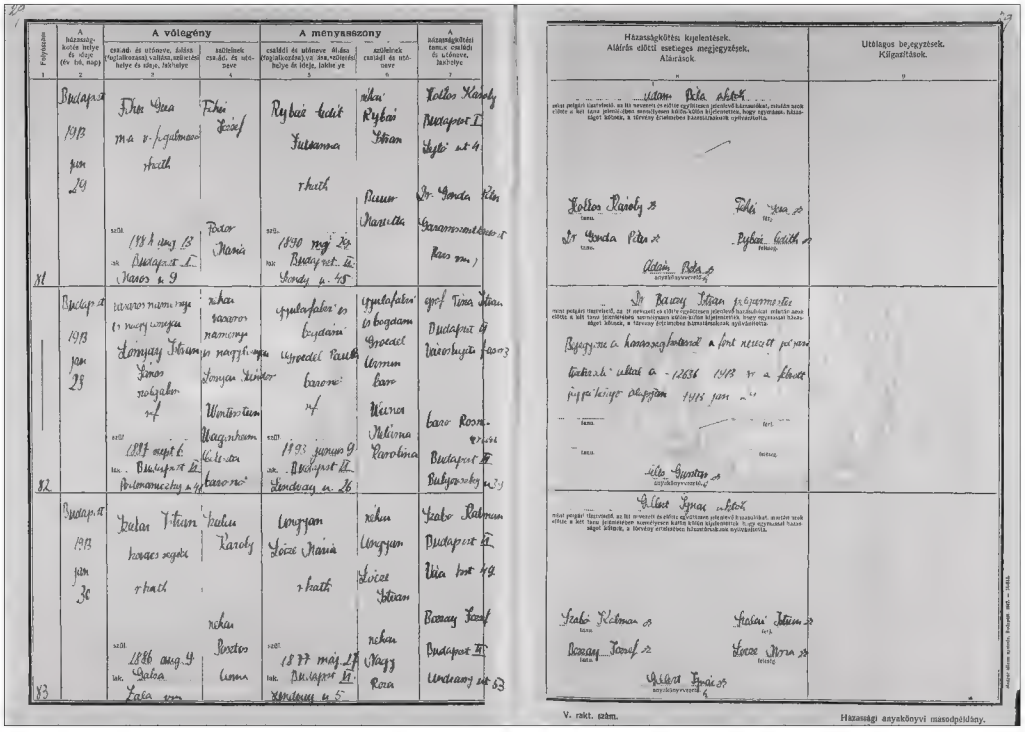


Trauungs-Buch für die Israel. Cultusgemeinde in Wien.

Des Bräutigams

Der Braut

Paula Groedel and Istvan Lonyay



A vőlegény

A menyasszony

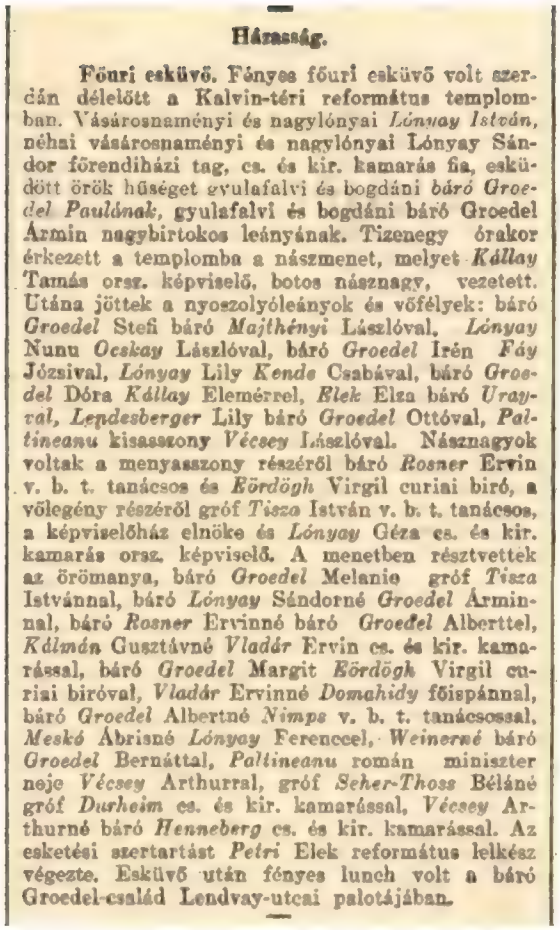
Házasságkötési nyilatkozatok. Aláírás előtti esetleges megjegyzések. Aláírások.

Utólagos bejegyzések. Kiigazítások.

V. rakt. szám.

Házassági anyakönyvi másodpéldány.

Paula's Wedding Article



Házasság.

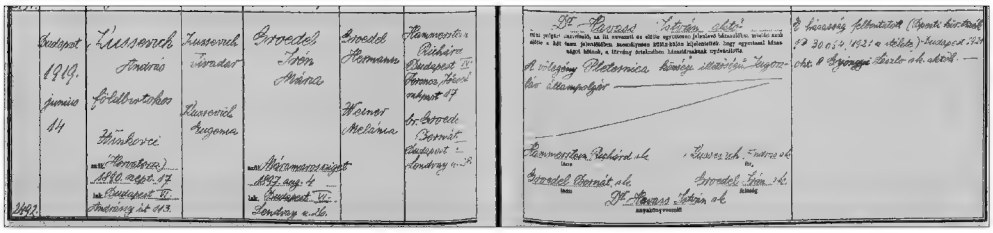
Főuri esküvő. Fényes főuri esküvő volt szerdán délelőtt a Kalvin-téri református templomban. Vásárosnaményi és nagylónyai *Lónyay István*, néhai vásárosnaményi és nagylónyai Lónyay Sándor főrendiházi tag, cs. és kir. kamarás fia, esküdött örök hűséget gyulafalvi és bogdáni *báró Groedel Paulának*, gyulafalvi és bogdáni báró Groedel Ármin nagybirtokos leányának. Tizenegy órakor érkezett a templomba a nászmenet, melyet *Kállay* Tamás orsz. képviselő, botos násznagy, vezetett. Utána jöttek a nyoszolyóleányok és vőfélyek: báró *Groedel* Stefi báró *Majthényi* Lászlóval, *Lónyay* Nunu *Ocskay* Lászlóval, báró *Groedel* Irén *Fáy* Józsival, *Lónyay* Lily *Kende* Csabával, báró *Groedel* Dóra *Kállay* Elemérrel, *Elek* Elza báró *Uray*val, *Lendesberger* Lily báró *Groedel* Ottóval, *Paltineanu* kisasszony *Vécsey* Lászlóval. Násznagyok voltak a menyasszony részéről báró *Rosner* Ervin v. b. t. tanácsos és *Erdögh* Virgil curiai biró, a vőlegény részéről gróf *Tisza* István v. b. t. tanácsos, a képviselőház elnöke és *Lónyay* Géza cs. és kir. kamarás orsz. képviselő. A menetben résztvettek az örömanya, báró *Groedel* Melanie gróf *Tisza* Istvánnal, báró *Lónyay* Sándorné *Groedel* Árminnal, báró *Rosner* Ervinné báró *Groedel* Alberttel, *Kálmán* Gusztávné *Vladár* Ervin cs. és kir. kamarással, báró *Groedel* Margit *Erdögh* Virgil curiai bíróval, *Vladár* Ervinné *Domahidy* főispánnal, báró *Groedel* Albertné *Nimpe* v. b. t. tanácsossal, *Meskó* Ábrisné *Lónyay* Ferenccel, *Weinerné* báró *Groedel* Bernáttal, *Paltineanu* román miniszter neje *Vécsey* Arthurral, gróf *Seher-Thoss* Béláné gróf *Durheim* cs. és kir. kamarással, *Vécsey* Arthurné báró *Henneberg* cs. és kir. kamarással. Az esketési szertartást *Petri* Elek református lelkész végezte. Esküvő után fényes lunch volt a báró Groedel-család Lendvay-utcai palotájában.

Oath of lord. There was a bright nobleman's wedding on Wednesday morning in the Kalvin-tér Reformed church. István Lónyay of Vásárosnamény and Nagylonya, late Sándor Lónyay of Vásárosnamény and Nagylonya, member of the Grand Order, cs. and who. the son of a chamberlain, he swore eternal fidelity to Paula, Baronness Groedel of Gyulafalv and Bogdán, daughter of Armin Groedel, baron of Gulafalv and Bogdán. The wedding procession arrived at the church at eleven o'clock, led by Tamás Kallay. representative, groomsman, led.

After them came the bridesmaids and groomsmen: baroness Stefi Groedel with baron László Maÿthényi, Nunu Lönyay with Laszlo Ocskay, baroness Irén Groedel with Jözsi Fáy, Lily Lonyay with Csaba Kende, baroness Dorá Groedel with Elemér Kallay, Elza Elek with Baron Uray, Lily Lendesberger with Baron Otto Groedel, Miss Paltineanu with László Vécsey. Best men on the bride's side were Baron Ervin Rosner, v. b. t. councillor and Baron Virgil Eördögh Curia judge; for the groom's side Count István Tisza, v. b. t. councillor, president of the House of Representatives Géza Lónyay, Imperial and Royal Chamberlain, member of parliament. The bride's mother participated in the procession. Baroness Melanie Groedel with Count István Tisza, Wife of Baron Sándor Lonyay with Baron Ármin Groedel, wife of Baron Ervin Rosner with Baron Albert Groedel, Mrs. Gusztáv Kalmán with the Imperial and Royal Chamberlain Ervin Vladár, Baroness Margit Groedel with Curia judge Virgil Eördögh, Mrs. Ervin Vladár with Archbishop Domahidy, Mrs. Ábris Meskó Feren Lónyay, Weiner's wife with Baron Bernhard Groedel, wife of the Romanian minister Paltineanu with Arthur Vécsey, Count Béla Seher-Thoss with the Countess Durheim, wife of Arthur Vécsey with baron Henneberg privy and Royal Chamerlain. The swearing-in ceremony was performed by Elek Petri, Reformed pastor. After the wedding there was a glittering lunch at the palace of Baron Groedel in Lendvay Street.

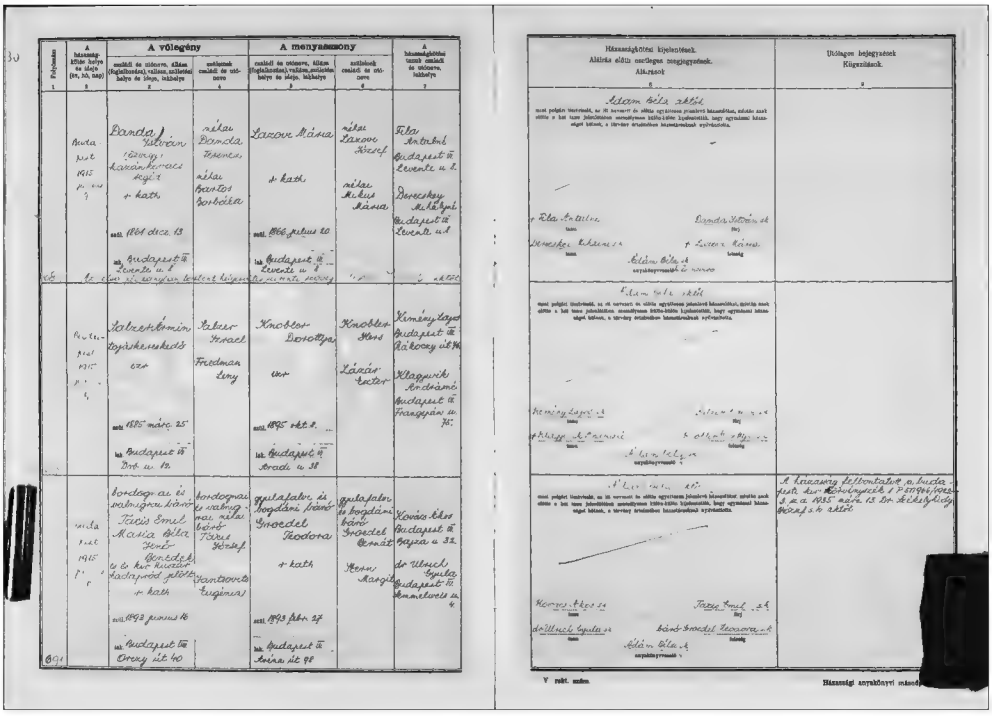
Irén and Andras Kussevich:

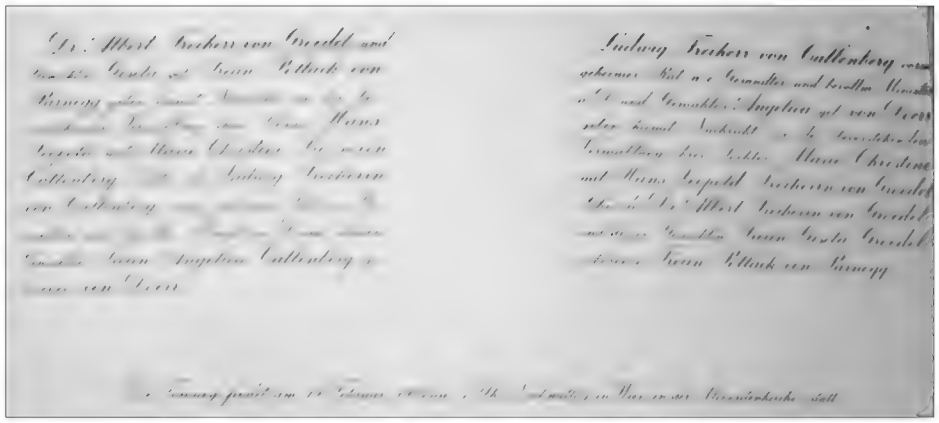
1919



Irén and Janos Svab:

1921



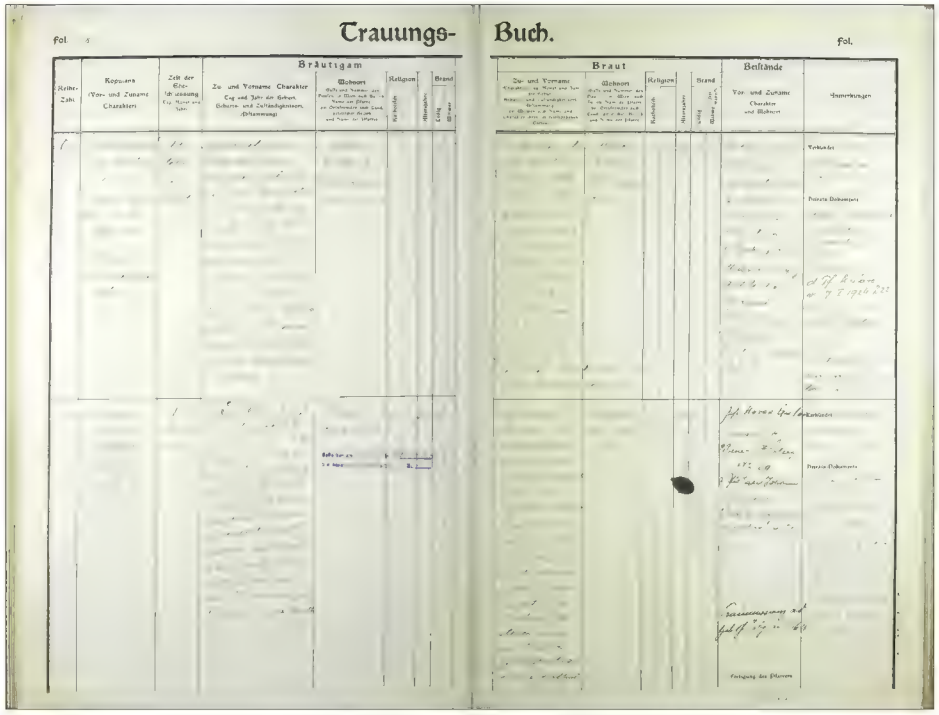


Hans and Marie

Callenberg invitation:

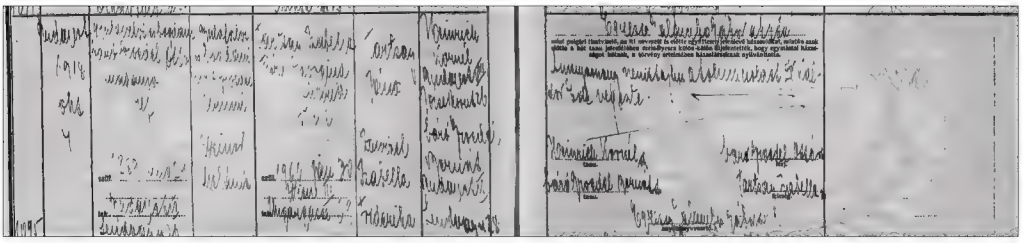
1924

Hans and Marie:

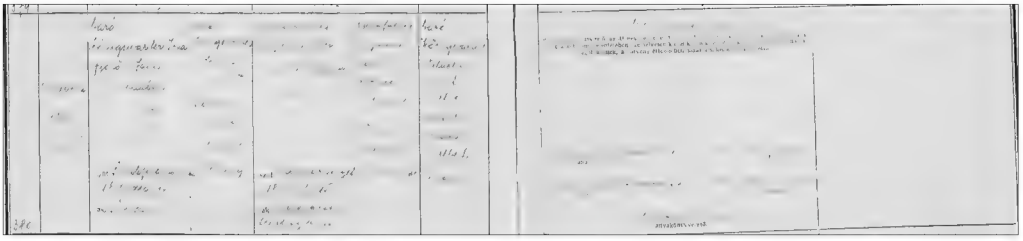


Otto and Maria von Tartsay:

1918

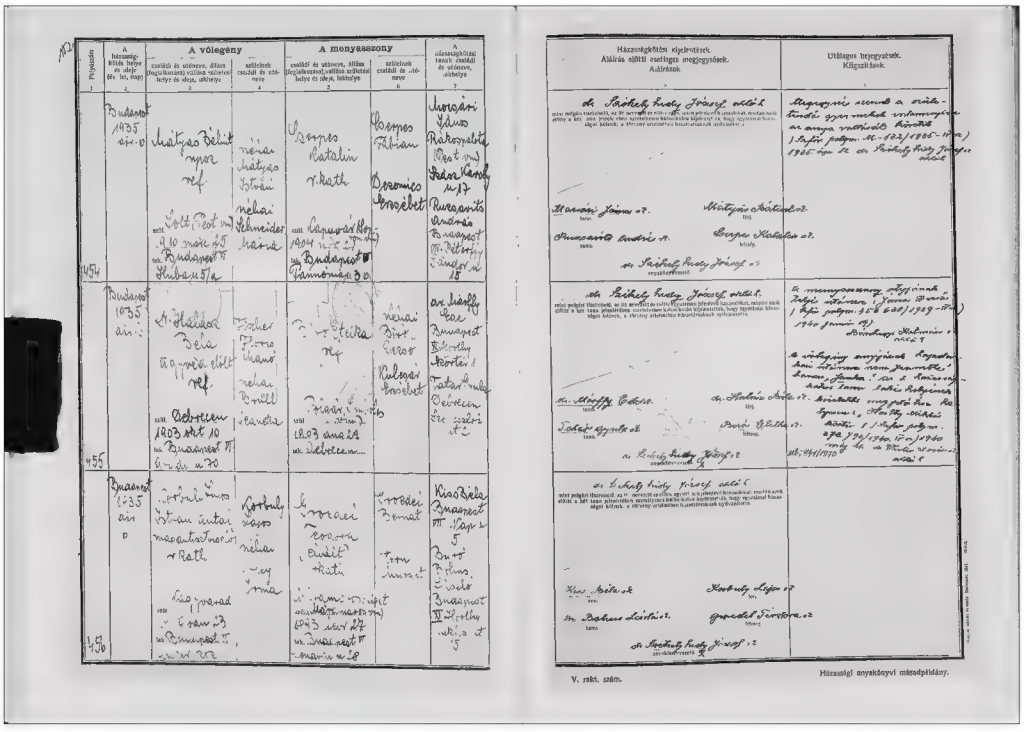


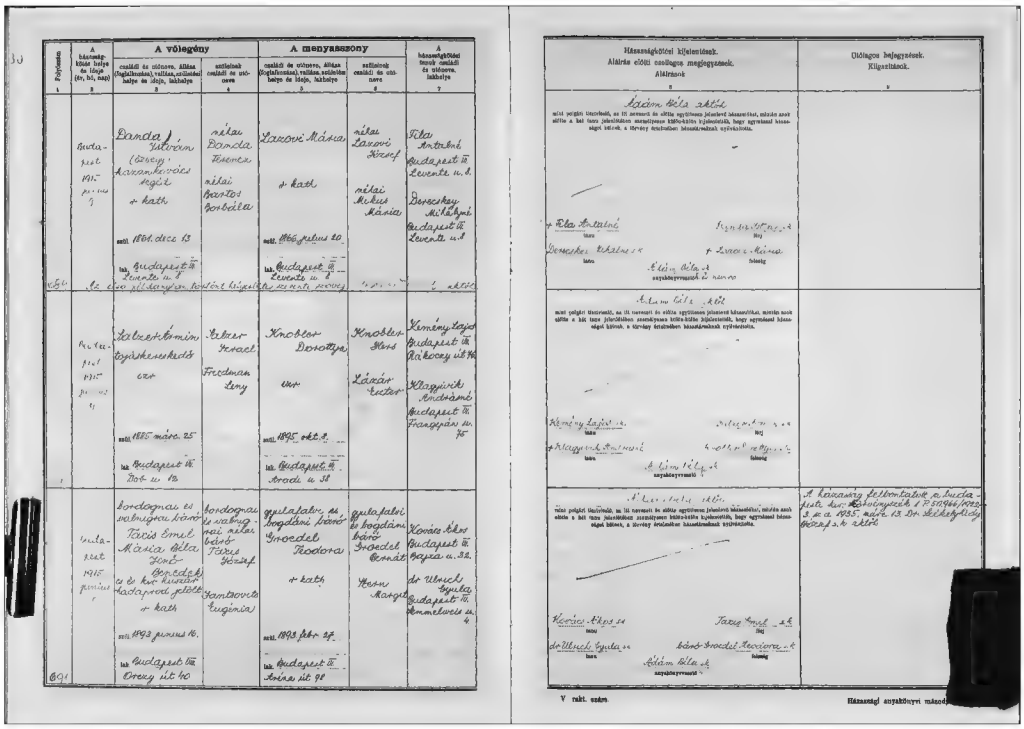
Stefanie and Viktor Konigswarter



Dora and Lajos Korbuly:

1935





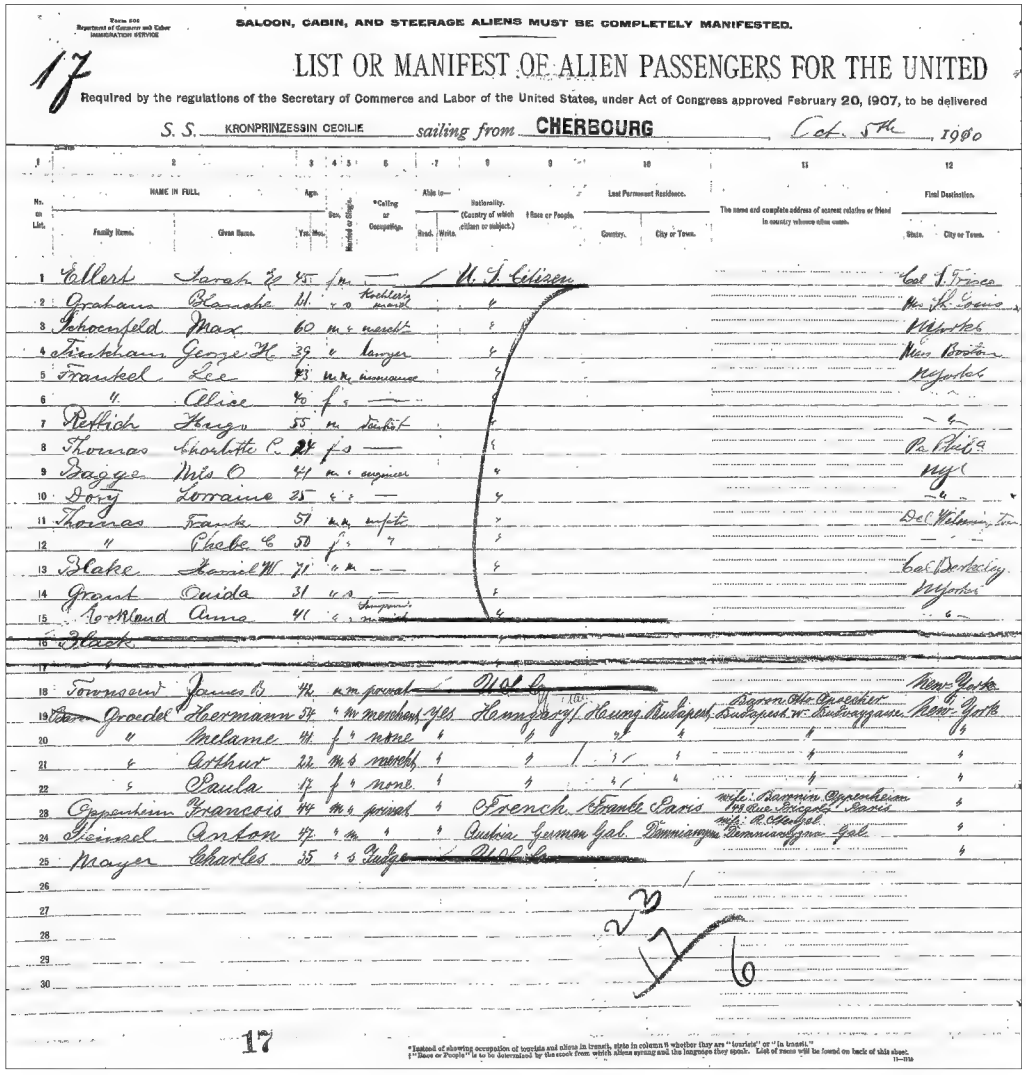
Dora and Emil Taxis:

1915

PASSENGER RECORDS/MANIFESTS

Hermann, Melanie, Paula and Arthur:

1910 to USA



SALOON, CABIN, AND STEERAGE ALIENS MUST BE COMPLETELY MANIFESTED.

17

LIST OR MANIFEST OF ALIEN PASSENGERS FOR THE UNITED

Required by the regulations of the Secretary of Commerce and Labor of the United States, under Act of Congress approved February 20, 1907, to be delivered

S. S. KRONPRINZESSIN CECILIE sailing from CHERBOURG Oct. 5th 1910

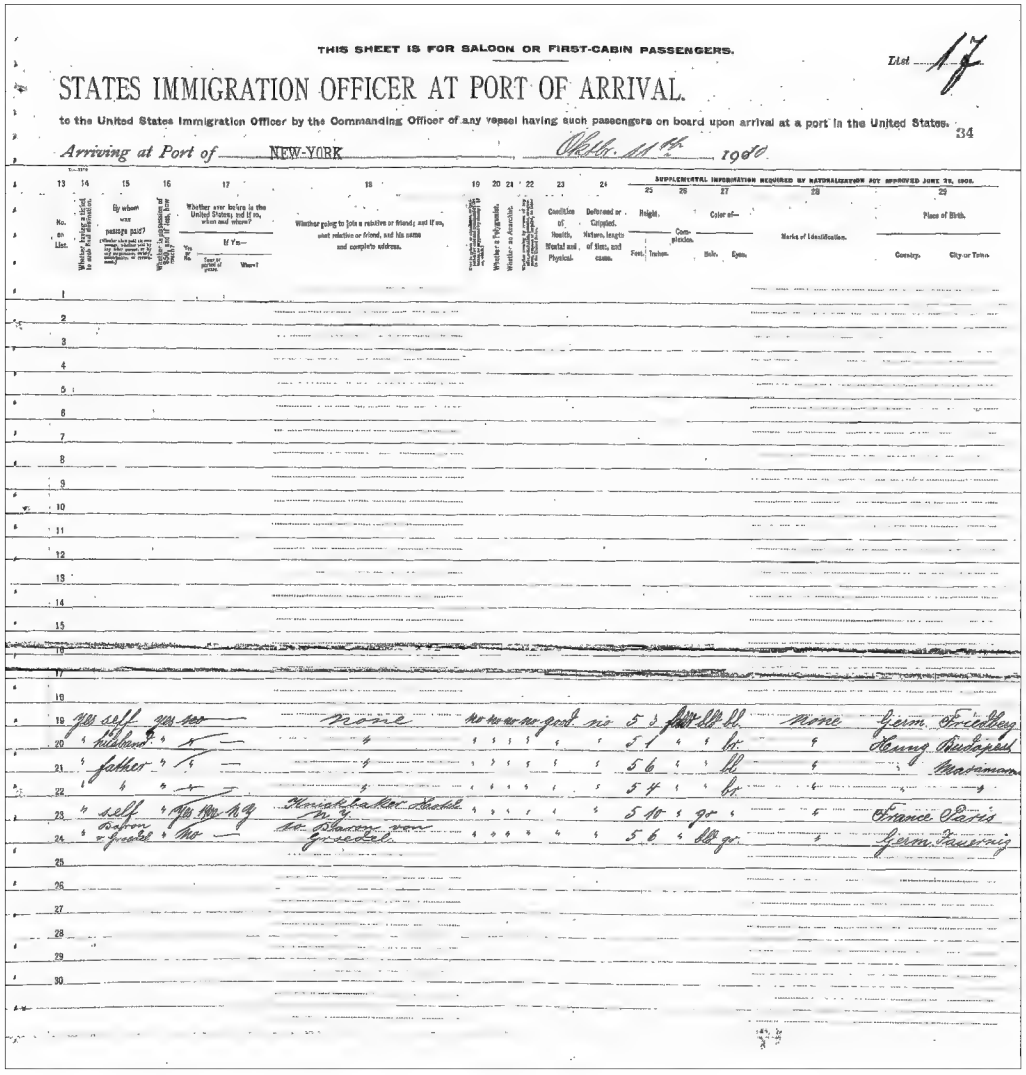
No. on List	Family Name.	Given Name.	Age. Yrs.	Mos.	Sex.	Married or Single.	*Calling or Occupation.	Able to—Read.	Able to—Write.	†Nationality. (Country of which citizen or subject.)	†Race or People.	Last Permanent Residence. Country.	Last Permanent Residence. City or Town.	The name and complete address of nearest relative or friend in country whence alien came.	Final Destination. State.	Final Destination. City or Town.
1	Ellert	Sarah E	45		f	m	—			U. S. Citizen					Col	Frisco
2	Grahams	Blanche	41		f	w	Teacher's assist								Mo	St. Louis
3	Schoenfeld	Max	60		m	s	merch't								Wash	Wash
4	Fairbairn	George H	39		m	s	lawyer								Mass	Boston
5	Frankel	Lee	23		m	s	insurance								N	N York
6	"	Alice	40		f	s	—									— "
7	Reffich	Hugo	55		m	Widr										— "
8	Thomas	Charlotte C	27		f	s	—								Pa	Phila
9	Dagyer	Mrs O	41		m	s	engineer									N Y
10	Dorry	Lorraine	25		f	s	—									— "
11	Thomas	Frank	57		m	m	upholst								Del	Wilmington
12	"	Phebe C	50		f	w	—									— "
13	Blake	Daniel W	71		m	m	—								Col	Berkeley
14	Grant	Ouida	31		f	s	—								N	York
15	Rowland	Anna	41		f	s	Surgeon's assist									— "
16	Black															
17																
18	Townsend	James B	44		m	marr'd	—			U S A					New	York
19	Goedel	Hermann	34		m	m	merchant	Yes	Yes	Hungary	Hungarian	Budapest, Hungary	Budapest	Mr. Otto Gruenbaum	New	York
20	"	Melanie	31		f	w	none	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
21	"	Arthur	22		m	s	merch't	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
22	"	Paula	17		f	s	none	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
23	Oppenheim	Francois	44		m	marr'd	—	"	"	French	Semite	Paris	Paris	wife: Rammin Oppenheim 109 Rue Bergere Paris		"
24	Steinsel	Anton	47		m	m	—	"	"	Austria	German	Gal.	Tarnow	wife: R. Steingal Tarnow	Gal.	"
25	Mayer	Charles	35		m	s	Tailor			U S A						"
26																
27																
28																
29																
30																

22 17 6

17

*Instead of showing occupation of tourists and aliens in transit, state in column 8 whether they are "tourists" or "in transit."
†"Race or People" is to be determined by the stock from which aliens spring and the language they speak. List of races will be found on back of this sheet.

Page 1



THIS SHEET IS FOR SALOON OR FIRST-CABIN PASSENGERS.

List 17

STATES IMMIGRATION OFFICER AT PORT OF ARRIVAL.

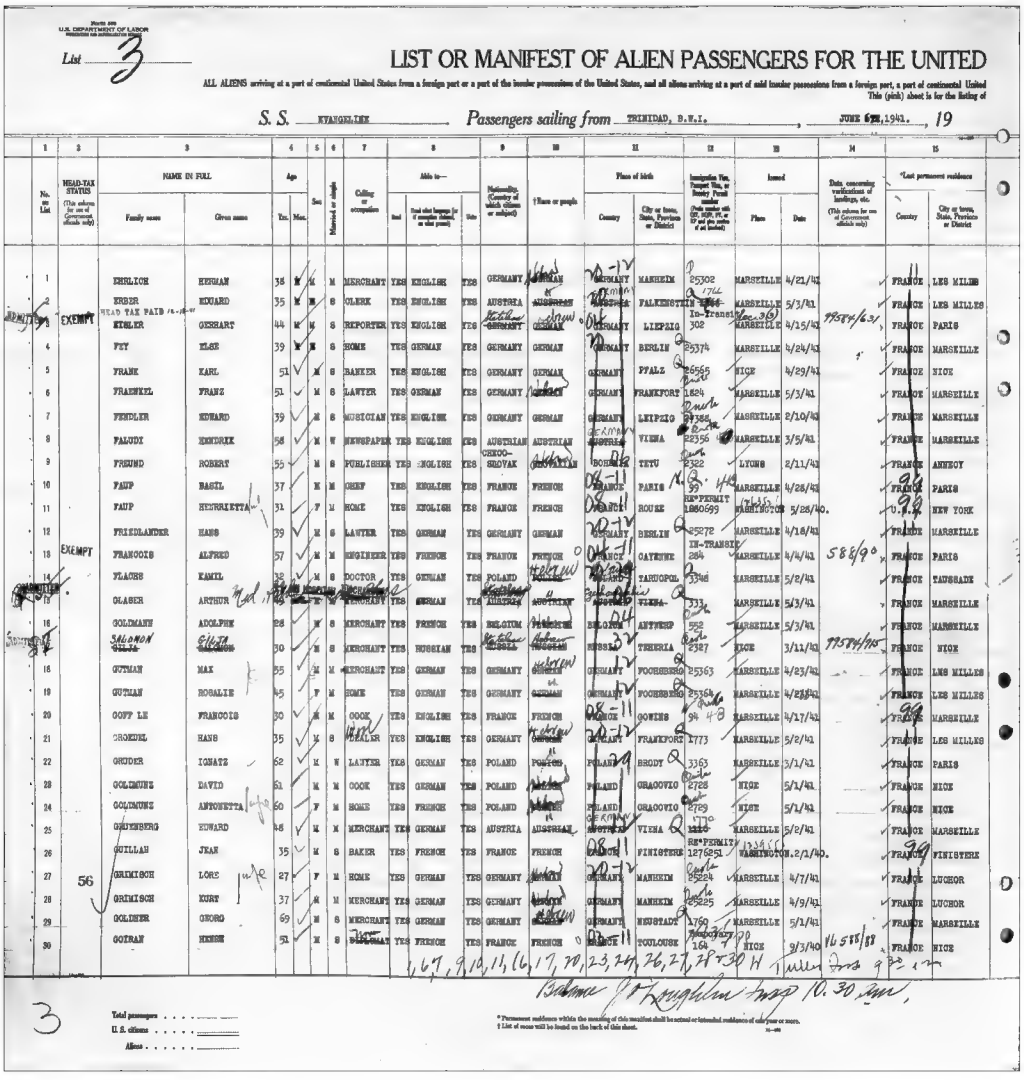
to the United States Immigration Officer by the Commanding Officer of any vessel having such passengers on board upon arrival at a port in the United States. 34

Arriving at Port of NEW-YORK Oktb. 11th 1900

13 No. on List.	14 Whether having a ticket to said final destination.	15 By whom was passage paid?	16 Whether in possession of $50 and upwards, and how much?	17 Whether ever before in the United States, and if so, when and where? If Yes— When?	18 Whether going to join a relative or friend; and if so, what relative or friend, and his name and complete address.	19 Whether a polygamist.	20 Whether an anarchist.	21 Whether a person who believes in or advocates the overthrow by force or violence of the Government of the United States.	22 Whether coming under the head of Prostitutes, or Persons coming for an immoral purpose.	23 Condition of Health, Mental and Physical.	24 Deformed or Crippled. Nature, length of time, and cause.	SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION REQUIRED BY NATURALIZATION ACT APPROVED JUNE 29, 1906. 25 Height. Feet. Inches.	26 Complexion.	27 Color of— Hair. Eyes.	28 Marks of Identification.	29 Place of Birth. Country. City or Town.
19		yes self	yes	No	none	no	no	no	no	good	no	5	fair	bl. bl.	none	Germ. Freiberg
20		husband										5	1	bl.		Austria Budapest
21		father										5	6	bl.		Austria Budapest
22												5	4	bl.		
23		self	yes	No	Heinrich Baker Laden							5	10	gr.	none	France Paris
24		Sohn von Friedel	no		bei Johann von Friedel							5	6	bl. gr.		Germ. Bavaria

Arthur and Ernst Groedel:

1912 to Vancouver



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

List 3

LIST OR MANIFEST OF ALIEN PASSENGERS FOR THE UNITED

ALL ALIENS arriving at a port of continental United States from a foreign port or a port of the insular possessions of the United States, and all aliens arriving at a port of said insular possessions from a foreign port, a part of continental United

This (pink) sheet is for the listing of

S. S. EVANGELINE Passengers sailing from TRINIDAD, B.W.I. JUNE 6th, 1943. 19

No. on List	HEAD-TAX STATUS (This column for use of Government officials only)	NAME IN FULL: Family name	NAME IN FULL: Given name	Age: Yrs.	Age: Mos.	Sex	Married or single	Calling or occupation	Able to—: Read	Able to—: Write	Nationality (Country of which citizen or subject)	†Race or people	Place of birth: Country	Place of birth: City or town, State, Province or District	Immigration Visa, Passport Visa, or Reentry Permit number (Data concerning visa: NO. NON. PV. or PV and the number if any issued)	Issued: Place	Issued: Date	Date, concerning verifications of landings, etc. (This column for use of Government officials only)	*Last permanent residence: Country	*Last permanent residence: City or town, State, Province or District
1		ERELICH	HERMAN	38	M	M		MERCHANT	YES	ENGLISH	YES	GERMANY	GERMAN	GERMANY	MANHEIM	25302	MARSEILLE	4/21/43		FRANCE	LES MILLE
2		ERDER	EDUARD	35	M	S		CLERK	YES	ENGLISH	YES	AUSTRIA	AUSSTRIAN	AUSTRIA	FALKENSTEIN	1744 In-Transit	MARSEILLE	5/3/43		FRANCE	LES MILLES
	EXEMPT	HEAD TAX PAID																		
3	EXEMPT	STELER	GERHART	44	M	M	S	REPORTER	YES	ENGLISH	YES	GERMANY	GERMAN	GERMANY	LEIPZIG	302	MARSEILLE	4/15/43	79584/631	FRANCE	PARIS
4		FET	ELSE	39	M	M	S	HOME	YES	GERMAN	YES	GERMANY	GERMAN	GERMANY	BERLIN	25374	MARSEILLE	4/24/43		FRANCE	MARSEILLE
5		FRANK	KARL	51		M	S	BAKER	YES	ENGLISH	YES	GERMANY	GERMAN	GERMANY	PFALZ	26565	NICE	4/29/43		FRANCE	NICE
6		FRANKEL	FRANZ	51		M	S	LAWYER	YES	GERMAN	YES	GERMANY	GERMAN	GERMANY	FRANKFORT	1824	MARSEILLE	5/3/43		FRANCE	MARSEILLE
7		FENDLER	EDUARD	39		M	S	MUSICIAN	YES	ENGLISH	YES	GERMANY	GERMAN	GERMANY	LEIPZIG	24386	MARSEILLE	2/10/43		FRANCE	MARSEILLE
8		FALUDI	ENDRIK	58		M	W	NEWSPAPER	YES	ENGLISH	YES	AUSTRIAN	AUSTRIAN	AUSTRIA	VIENA	22356	MARSEILLE	3/5/43		FRANCE	MARSEILLE
9		FREUND	ROBERT	55		M	S	PUBLISHER	YES	ENGLISH	YES	CZECO-SLOVAK	(CZECHOSLAV	CZECHOSLOVAKIA	TETU	2322	LYONS	2/11/43		FRANCE	ANNECY
10		FAUP	BASIL	37		M	M	CHEF	YES	ENGLISH	YES	FRANCE	FRENCH	FRANCE	PARIS	99	MARSEILLE	4/28/43		FRANCE	PARIS
11		FAUP	HENRIETTA	31		F	M	HOME	YES	ENGLISH	YES	FRANCE	FRENCH	FRANCE	ROUEN	RE-PERMIT 1860699	WASHINGTON	5/28/40.		U.S.A.	NEW YORK
12		FRIEDLANDER	HANS	39		M	S	LAWYER	YES	GERMAN	YES	GERMANY	GERMAN	GERMANY	BERLIN	25272	MARSEILLE	4/16/43		FRANCE	MARSEILLE
13	EXEMPT	FRANCOIS	ALFRED	57		M	M	ENGINEER	YES	FRENCH	YES	FRANCE	FRENCH	FRANCE	CAYENNE	IN-TRANSIT 284	MARSEILLE	4/4/43	586/90	FRANCE	PARIS
14		FLACHS	KAMIL	32		M	S	DOCTOR	YES	GERMAN	YES	POLAND		POLAND	TARUOPOL	3348	MARSEILLE	5/2/43		FRANCE	TAUSSADE
15		GLASER	ARTHUR			M			YES	GERMAN	YES	AUSTRIA	AUSTRIAN	AUSTRIA	VIENA	333	MARSEILLE	5/3/43		FRANCE	MARSEILLE
16		GOLDMANN	ADOLPHE	28		M	S	MERCHANT	YES	FRENCH	YES	BELGIUM		BELGIUM	ANTWERP	552	MARSEILLE	5/3/43		FRANCE	MARSEILLE
		SALOMON	GILETA																		
17		GILLA	SALOMON	30		M	S	MERCHANT	YES	RUSSIAN	YES	RUSSIA		RUSSIA	TYNERIA	2327	NICE	3/11/43	79584/115	FRANCE	NICE
18		GUTMAN	MAX	55		M	M	MERCHANT	YES	GERMAN	YES	GERMANY	GERMAN	GERMANY	FOOCHEBERG	25363	MARSEILLE	4/23/43		FRANCE	LES MILLES
19		GUTMAN	ROSALIE	45		F	M	HOME	YES	GERMAN	YES	GERMANY	GERMAN	GERMANY	FOOCHEBERG	25364	MARSEILLE	4/23/43		FRANCE	LES MILLES
20		GOFF LE	FRANCOIS	30		M	M	COOK	YES	ENGLISH	YES	FRANCE	FRENCH	FRANCE	GOWINS	94 48	MARSEILLE	4/17/43		FRANCE	MARSEILLE
21		GROEDEL	HANS	35		M	S	DEALER	YES	ENGLISH	YES	GERMANY	GERMAN	GERMANY	FRANKFORT	1773	MARSEILLE	5/2/43		FRANCE	LES MILLES
22		GRUDER	IGNATZ	52		M	W	LAWYER	YES	GERMAN	YES	POLAND	POLISH	POLAND	BRODY	3163	MARSEILLE	3/1/43		FRANCE	PARIS
23		GOLDMUNZ	DAVID	51		M	M	COOK	YES	GERMAN	YES	POLAND		POLAND	GRAGOVIO	6728	NICE	5/1/43		FRANCE	NICE
24		GOLDMUNZ	ANTONETTA	50		F	M	HOME	YES	FRENCH	YES	POLAND		POLAND	GRAGOVIO	2769	NICE	5/1/43		FRANCE	NICE
25		GRUNBERG	EDUARD	46		M	M	MERCHANT	YES	GERMAN	YES	AUSTRIA	AUSSTRIAN	AUSTRIA	VIENA	1770	MARSEILLE	5/2/43		FRANCE	MARSEILLE
26		GUILLAN	JEAN	35		M	S	BAKER	YES	FRENCH	YES	FRANCE	FRENCH	FRANCE	FINISTERE	RE-PERMIT 1276251	WASHINGTON	2/1/40.		FRANCE	FINISTERE
27	56	GRIMISCH	LORE	27		F	M	HOME	YES	GERMAN	YES	GERMANY	GERMAN	GERMANY	MANHEIM	25224	MARSEILLE	4/7/43		FRANCE	LUCHON
28		GRIMISCH	KURT	37		M	M	MERCHANT	YES	GERMAN	YES	GERMANY	GERMAN	GERMANY	MANHEIM	25225	MARSEILLE	4/9/43		FRANCE	LUCHON
29		GOLDNER	GEORG	69		M	S	MERCHANT	YES	GERMAN	YES	GERMANY	GERMAN	GERMANY	NEUSTADT	1769	MARSEILLE	5/1/43		FRANCE	MARSEILLE
30		GOIRAN	HENRI	51		M	S		YES	FRENCH	YES	FRANCE	FRENCH	FRANCE	TOULOUSE	164	NICE	9/3/40	16555/83	FRANCE	NICE

1, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 6, 17, 20, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 30 H

Balance of Englishmen Sheep 10. 30 Inn.

3

Total passengers . . . . . ____

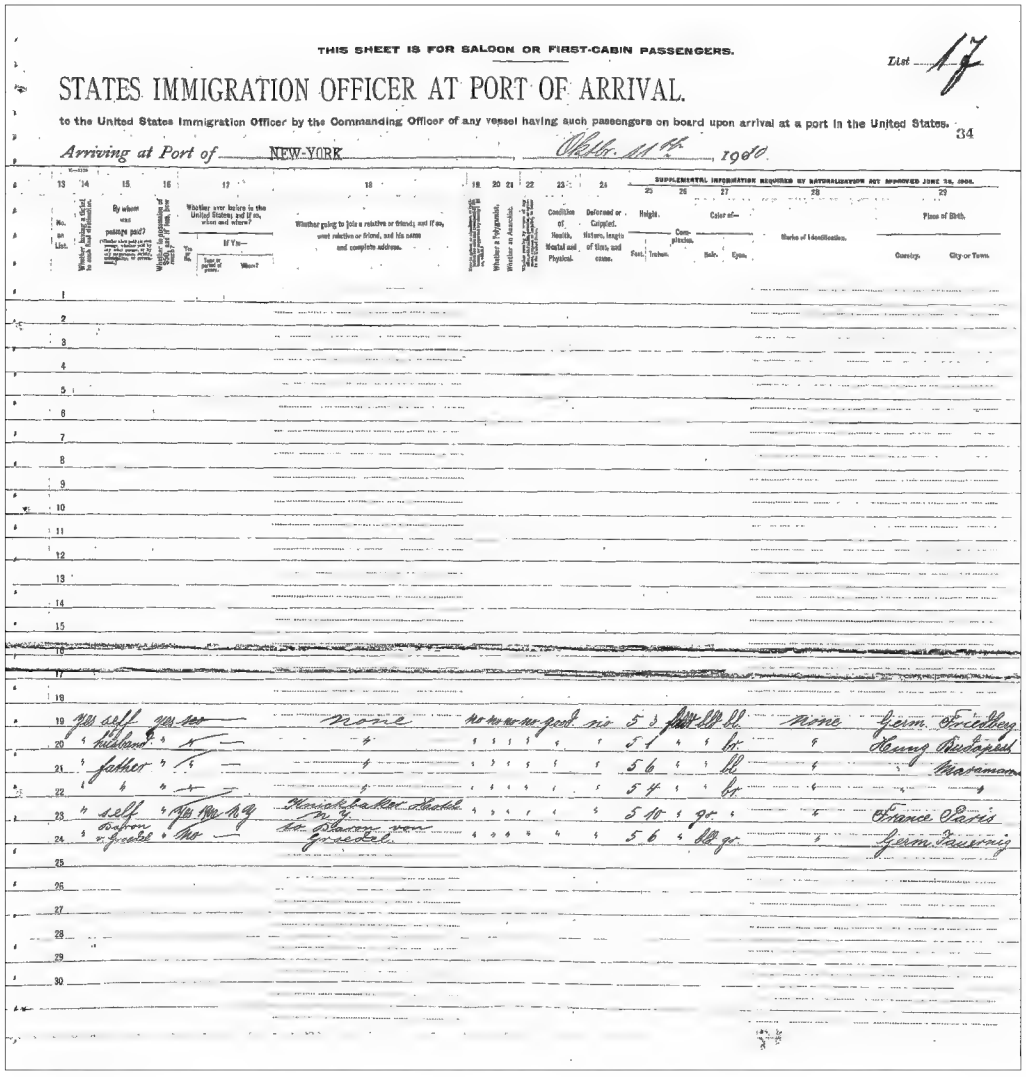
U. S. citizens . . . . . ____

Aliens . . . . . ____

* Permanent residence within the meaning of this manifest shall be actual or intended residence of one year or more.

† List of races will be found on the back of this sheet.

Page 1



THIS SHEET IS FOR SALOON OR FIRST-CABIN PASSENGERS.

List 17

STATES IMMIGRATION OFFICER AT PORT OF ARRIVAL.

to the United States Immigration Officer by the Commanding Officer of any vessel having such passengers on board upon arrival at a port in the United States. 34

Arriving at Port of NEW-YORK, Oktbr. 11th 1900

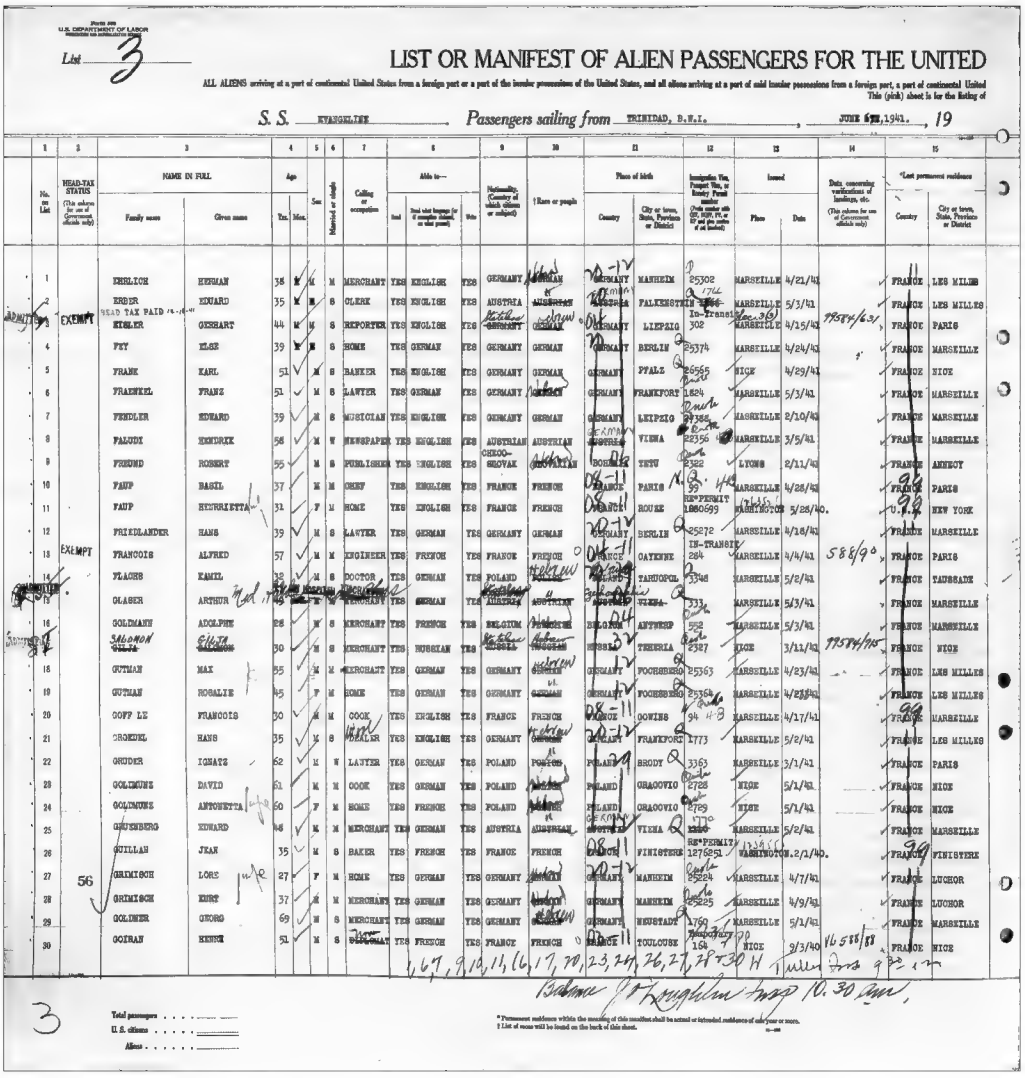
SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION REQUIRED BY NATURALIZATION ACT APPROVED JUNE 29, 1906.

No. on List.	13 Whether Holding a Ticket for such Final Destination.	14 By whom was passage paid?	15 Whether in possession of $50 and upwards.	16 Whether ever before in the United States, and if so, when and where? If Yes—	17 Whether going to join a relative or friend; and if so, what relative or friend, and his name and complete address.	18 Whether a Polygamist.	19 Whether an Anarchist.	20 Whether coming by reason of any offer, solicitation, promise, or agreement to perform labor or service of any kind in the United States.	21 Condition of Health, Mental and Physical.	22 Deformed or Crippled. Nature, length of time, and cause.	23 Height.	24 Complexion.	25 Color of— Hair.	26 Eyes.	27 Marks of Identification.	28 Place of Birth. Country.	29 City or Town.
19	yes	yes	yes	none	no no no no good	no					5 3		blk		none		Germ. Friedberg
20	husband										5 1		br				Hung. Budapest
21	father										5 6		bl				Moravia
22											5 4		br				
23	self	yes	yes	Hannah Baker Sister							5 10		gy				France Paris
24	son-in-law			the Glaser son-in-law							5 6		bl gy				Germ. Saarwig

Page 2

Hans Groedel:

1941



Form 430
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

List 3

LIST OR MANIFEST OF ALIEN PASSENGERS FOR THE UNITED

ALL ALIENS arriving at a port of continental United States from a foreign port or a part of the insular possessions of the United States, and all aliens arriving at a port of said insular possessions from a foreign port, a part of continental United This (pink) sheet is for the Rating of

S. S. EVANGELINE Passengers sailing from TRINIDAD, B.W.I. JUNE 6TH, 1941. 19

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
No. on List	HEAD-TAX STATUS (This column for use of Government officials only)	NAME IN FULL: Family name	NAME IN FULL: Given name	Age: Yrs.	Age: Mos.	Sex	Married or single	Calling or occupation	Able to—: Read (what language)	Able to—: Write	Nationality, (Country of which citizen or subject)	† Race or people	Place of birth: Country	Place of birth: City or town, State, Province or District	Immigration Visa, Passport Visa, or Reentry Permit number (Give number with ISS, NON, PE, or PP and give number of an reentry)	Issued: Place	Issued: Date	Data concerning verifications of landings, etc. (This column for use of Government officials only)	*Last permanent residence: Country	*Last permanent residence: City or town, State, Province or District
1		ERELICH	HERMAN	38	M	M		MERCHANT	YES ENGLISH	YES	GERMANY	GERMAN	GERMANY	MANHEIM	25302	MARSEILLE	4/21/41		FRANCE	LES MILLE
2	EXEMPT	EDER	EDUARD	35	M	S		CLERK	YES ENGLISH	YES	AUSTRIA	AUSTRIAN	AUSTRIA	FALKENSTEIN	In-Transit	MARSEILLE	5/3/41		FRANCE	LES MILLES
3		HIELER	GERHART	44	M	S		REPORTER	YES ENGLISH	YES	GERMANY	GERMAN	GERMANY	LIEPZIG	302	MARSEILLE	4/15/41	77584/631	FRANCE	PARIS
4		FEY	ELSE	39	F	S		HOME	YES GERMAN	YES	GERMANY	GERMAN	GERMANY	BERLIN	25374	MARSEILLE	4/24/41		FRANCE	MARSEILLE
5		FRANK	KARL	51	M	S		BANKER	YES ENGLISH	YES	GERMANY	GERMAN	GERMANY	PFALZ	20565	NICE	4/29/41		FRANCE	NICE
6		FRANKEL	FRANZ	51	M	S		LAWYER	YES GERMAN	YES	GERMANY		GERMANY	FRANKFORT	1824	MARSEILLE	5/3/41		FRANCE	MARSEILLE
7		FRENDLER	EDUARD	39	M	S		MUSICIAN	YES ENGLISH	YES	GERMANY	GERMAN	GERMANY	LEIPZIG	24388	MARSEILLE	2/10/41		FRANCE	MARSEILLE
8		FALUDI	HENDRIK	58	M	W		NEWSPAPER	YES ENGLISH	YES	AUSTRIAN	AUSTRIAN	AUSTRIA	VIENA	22356	MARSEILLE	3/5/41		FRANCE	MARSEILLE
9		FREUND	ROBERT	55	M	S		PUBLISHER	YES ENGLISH	YES	CHECO-SLOVAK	CZECHOSLOVAK	BOHEMIA	TETU	2322	LYONS	2/11/41		FRANCE	ANNECY
10		FAUP	BASIL	37	M	M		CHEF	YES ENGLISH	YES	FRANCE	FRENCH	FRANCE	PARIS	59	MARSEILLE	4/28/41		FRANCE	PARIS
11		FAUP	HENRIETTA	31	F	M		HOME	YES ENGLISH	YES	FRANCE	FRENCH	FRANCE	ROUEN	RE-PERMIT 1860699	WASHINGTON	5/28/40.		U.S.A.	NEW YORK
12		FRIEDLANDER	HANS	39	M	S		LAWYER	YES GERMAN	YES	GERMANY	GERMAN	GERMANY	BERLIN	25272	MARSEILLE	4/18/41		FRANCE	MARSEILLE
13	EXEMPT	FRANCOIS	ALFRED	57	M	M		ENGINEER	YES FRENCH	YES	FRANCE	FRENCH	FRANCE	CAYENNE	IN-TRANSIT 284	MARSEILLE	4/4/41	586/90	FRANCE	PARIS
14		FLACHS	KAMIL	38	M	S		DOCTOR	YES GERMAN	YES	POLAND		POLAND	TARNOPOL	3348	MARSEILLE	5/2/41		FRANCE	TARBRADE
15		GLASER	ARTHUR	46	M	W		MERCHANT	YES GERMAN	YES	AUSTRIA	AUSTRIAN	AUSTRIA	VIENA	333	MARSEILLE	5/3/41		FRANCE	MARSEILLE
16		GOLDMANN	ADOLPHE	28	M	S		MERCHANT	YES FRENCH	YES	BELGIUM		BELGIUM	ANTWERP	552	MARSEILLE	5/3/41		FRANCE	MARSEILLE
17		SALOMON	ELLA	30	M	S		MERCHANT	YES RUSSIAN	YES	RUSSIA		RUSSIA	THERIA	2387	NICE	3/11/41	77584/15	FRANCE	NICE
18		GUTMAN	MAX	55	M	M		MERCHANT	YES GERMAN	YES	GERMANY	GERMAN	GERMANY	FOCHSBERG	25363	MARSEILLE	4/23/41		FRANCE	LES MILLES
19		GUTMAN	ROSALIE	45	F	M		HOME	YES GERMAN	YES	GERMANY	GERMAN	GERMANY	FOCHSBERG	25364	MARSEILLE	4/23/41		FRANCE	LES MILLES
20		GOFF LE	FRANCOIS	30	M	M		COOK	YES ENGLISH	YES	FRANCE	FRENCH	FRANCE	DOWINS	94	MARSEILLE	4/17/41		FRANCE	MARSEILLE
21		GROEDEL	HANS	35	M	S		DEALER	YES ENGLISH	YES	GERMANY	GERMAN	GERMANY	FRANKFORT	1773	MARSEILLE	5/2/41		FRANCE	LES MILLES
22		GRUDER	IGNATZ	62	M	W		LAYER	YES GERMAN	YES	POLAND	POLISH	POLAND	BRODY	3363	MARSEILLE	3/1/41		FRANCE	PARIS
23		GOLDMUNZ	DAVID	61	M	M		COOK	YES GERMAN	YES	POLAND		POLAND	GRAGOVIO	2728	NICE	5/1/41		FRANCE	NICE
24		GOLDMUNZ	ANTOINETTA	60	F	M		HOME	YES FRENCH	YES	POLAND		POLAND	GRAGOVIO	2729	NICE	5/1/41		FRANCE	NICE
25		GRUNBERG	EDUARD	46	M	M		MERCHANT	YES GERMAN	YES	AUSTRIA	AUSTRIAN	AUSTRIA	VIENA	2330	MARSEILLE	5/2/41		FRANCE	MARSEILLE
26		GUILLAN	JEAN	35	M	S		BAKER	YES FRENCH	YES	FRANCE	FRENCH	FRANCE	VINIGTERE	RE-PERMIT 1276851	WASHINGTON	2/1/40.		FRANCE	FINISTERE
27	56	GRIMISCH	LORE	27	F	M		HOME	YES GERMAN	YES	GERMANY		GERMANY	MANHEIM	25224	MARSEILLE	4/7/41		FRANCE	LUCHOR
28		GRIMISCH	KURT	37	M	M		MERCHANT	YES GERMAN	YES	GERMANY		GERMANY	MANHEIM	25225	MARSEILLE	4/9/41		FRANCE	LUCHOR
29		GOLDNER	GEORG	69	M	S		MERCHANT	YES GERMAN	YES	GERMANY		GERMANY	NEUSTADT	1790	MARSEILLE	5/1/41		FRANCE	MARSEILLE
30		GOIRAN	HENRI	51	M	S			YES FRENCH	YES	FRANCE	FRENCH	FRANCE	TOULOUSE	154	NICE	2/3/40	V6 588/83	FRANCE	NICE

1, 67, 9, 10, 11, 6, 17, 20, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 30 H

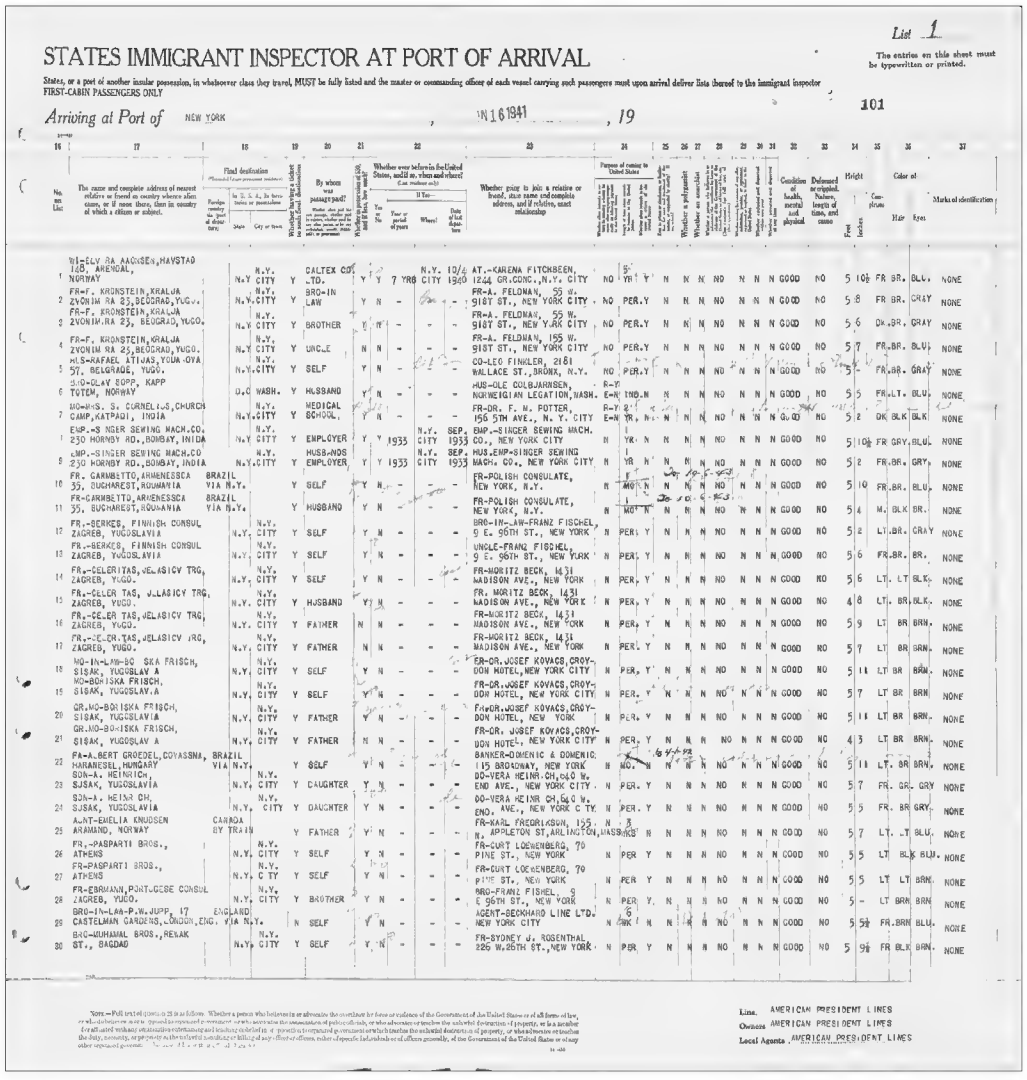
Balance for Evangeline Sept 10. 30 AM.

3

Total passengers 30
U.S. citizens 0
Aliens 30

* Permanent residence within the meaning of this manifest shall be actual or intended residence of one year or more.
† List of races will be found on the back of this sheet.

Page 1



List 1

The entries on this sheet must be typewritten or printed.

STATES IMMIGRANT INSPECTOR AT PORT OF ARRIVAL

States, or a port of another insular possession, to whatsoever class they travel, MUST be fully listed and the master or commanding officer of each vessel carrying such passengers must upon arrival deliver lists thereof to the immigrant inspector
FIRST-CABIN PASSENGERS ONLY

Arriving at Port of NEW YORK , JN 16 1941 , 19

101

No. on List	The name and complete address of nearest relative or friend in country whence alien came, or if none there, then in country of which a citizen or subject.	Final destination (Intended final permanent residence) In U. S. A. (In Territories or possessions) State	City or Town	Whether having a ticket to final destination	By whom was passage paid?	Whether in possession of $50, and if not, how much?	Whether ever before in the United States, and if so, when and where? (Last residence only) Yes	Year or period of years	Where?	Date of last departure	Whether going to join a relative or friend, state name and complete address, and if relative, exact relationship	Purpose of coming to United States	Whether a polygamist	Whether an anarchist	Whether deformed or crippled	Whether coming under contract labor laws	Whether in prison, almshouse, asylum, or hospital within past year	Whether a professional beggar	Whether a stowaway	Condition of health, mental and physical	Deformed or crippled. Nature, length of time, and cause	Height Feet	Height Inches	Color of Hair	Color of Eyes	Marks of identification
1	WI-ELV-RA AAGNSEN,HAVSTAD 108, AHENDAL, NORWAY		N.Y. CITY	Y	CALTEX CO. LTD.	Y	Y	7 YRS	N.Y. CITY	10/4 1920	AT.-KARENA FLTCKBEEN, 1244 GR.CONC.,N.Y. CITY	NO	5' YR. Y	N	N	N	NO	N	N	N GOOD	NO	5	10½	FR	BR.	BLU.	NONE
2	FR-F. KRONSTEIN,KRALJA ZVONIM RA 23,BEOGRAD,YUGV.		N.Y. CITY	Y	BRO-IN LAW	Y	N	-	-	-	FR-A. FELDMAN, 55 W. 91ST ST., NEW YORK CITY	NO	PER.Y	N	N	N	NO	N	N	N GOOD	NO	5	8	FR	BR.	GRAY	NONE
3	FR-F. KRONSTEIN,KRALJA ZVONIM RA 23, BEGRAD,YUGO.		N.Y. CITY	Y	BROTHER	Y	N	-	-	-	FR-A. FELDMAN, 55 W. 91ST ST., NEW YORK CITY	NO	PER.Y	N	N	N	NO	N	N	N GOOD	NO	5	6	DK.	BR.	GRAY	NONE
4	FR-F. KRONSTEIN,KRALJA ZVONIM RA 23,BEOGRAD,YUGO.		N.Y. CITY	Y	UNCLE	N	N	-	-	-	FR-A. FELDMAN, 155 W. 91ST ST., NEW YORK CITY	NO	PER.Y	N	N	N	NO	N	N	N GOOD	NO	5	7	FR.	BR.	BLU.	NONE
5	MLS-RAFAEL ATIJAS,YOUA-OYA 57, BELGRADE, YUGO.		N.Y. CITY	Y	SELF	Y	N	-	-	-	CO-LEO FINKLER, 2181 WALLACE ST., BRONX, N.Y.	NO	PER.Y	N	N	N	NO	N	N	N GOOD	NO	5	-	FR.	BR.	GRAY	NONE
6	JO-OLAV EOPP, KAPP TOTEN, NORWAY		D.C. WASH.	Y	HUSBAND	Y	N	-	-	-	HUS-OLE COLBJARNSEN, NORWEIGIAN LEGATION, WASH.	E-W	IND.N	N	N	N	NO	N	N	N GOOD	NO	5	5	FR.	LT.	BLU.	NONE
7	MO-RHS. S. CORNELIUS,CHURCH CAMP,KATPADI, INDIA		N.Y. CITY	Y	MEDICAL SCHOOL	Y	N	-	-	-	FR-DR. F. W. POTTER, 156 5TH AVE., N. Y. CITY	E-W	YR. N	N	N	N	NO	N	N	N GOOD	NO	5	2	DK.	BLK	BLK	NONE
8	EMP.-SINGER SEWING MACH.CO. 230 HORNBY RD.,BOMBAY, INIDA		N.Y. CITY	Y	EMPLOYER	Y	Y	1933	N.Y. CITY	SEP. 1933	EMP.-SINGER SEWING MACH. CO., NEW YORK CITY	N	YR. N	N	N	N	NO	N	N	N GOOD	NO	5	10½	FR	GRY.	BLU.	NONE
9	EMP.-SINGER SEWING MACH.CO 230 HORNBY RD.,BOMBAY, INDIA		N.Y. CITY	Y	HUSB-NDS EMPLOYER	Y	Y	1933	N.Y. CITY	SEP. 1933	HUS.EMP-SINGER SEWING MACH. CO., NEW YORK CITY	N	YR. N	N	N	N	NO	N	N	N GOOD	NO	5	2	FR.	BR.	GRY.	NONE
10	FR. CARMBETTO,ARMENESSCA 35, BUCHAREST,ROUMANIA	BRAZIL VIA N.Y.		Y	SELF	Y	N	-	-	-	FR-POLISH CONSULATE, NEW YORK, N.Y.	N	MO. N	N	N	N	NO	N	N	N GOOD	NO	5	10	FR.	BR.	BLU.	NONE
11	FR-CARMBETTO,ARMENESSCA 35, BUCHAREST,ROUMANIA	BRAZIL VIA N.Y.		Y	HUSBAND	Y	N	-	-	-	FR-POLISH CONSULATE, NEW YORK, N.Y.	N	MO. N	N	N	N	NO	N	N	N GOOD	NO	5	4	M.	BLK	BR.	NONE
12	FR.-BERGES, FINNISH CONSUL ZAGREB, YUGOSLAVIA		N.Y. CITY	Y	SELF	Y	N	-	-	-	BRO-IN-LAW-FRANZ FISCHEL, 9 E. 96TH ST., NEW YORK	N	PER. Y	N	N	N	NO	N	N	N GOOD	NO	5	2	LT.	BR.	GRAY	NONE
13	FR.-BERGES, FINNISH CONSUL ZAGREB, YUGOSLAVIA		N.Y. CITY	Y	SELF	Y	N	-	-	-	UNCLE-FRANZ FISCHEL, 9 E. 96TH ST., NEW YORK	N	PER. Y	N	N	N	NO	N	N	N GOOD	NO	5	6	FR.	BR.	BR.	NONE
14	FR.-CELERITAS,JELASICV TRG, ZAGREB, YUGO.		N.Y. CITY	Y	SELF	Y	N	-	-	-	FR-MORITZ BECK, 1431 MADISON AVE., NEW YORK	N	PER. Y	N	N	N	NO	N	N	N GOOD	NO	5	6	LT.	LT	BLK.	NONE
15	FR.-CELER TAS, JELASICV TRG, ZAGREB, YUGO.		N.Y. CITY	Y	HUSBAND	Y	N	-	-	-	FR. MORITZ BECK, 1431 MADISON AVE., NEW YORK	N	PER. Y	N	N	N	NO	N	N	N GOOD	NO	4	8	LT.	BR.	BLK.	NONE
16	FR.-CELER TAS,JELASICV TRG, ZAGREB, YUGO.		N.Y. CITY	Y	FATHER	N	N	-	-	-	FR-MORITZ BECK, 1431 MADISON AVE., NEW YORK	N	PER. Y	N	N	N	NO	N	N	N GOOD	NO	5	9	LT	BR	BRN.	NONE
17	FR.-CELER TAS,JELASICV TRG, ZAGREB, YUGO.		N.Y. CITY	Y	FATHER	N	N	-	-	-	FR-MORITZ BECK, 1431 MADISON AVE., NEW YORK	N	PER. Y	N	N	N	NO	N	N	N GOOD	NO	5	7	LT	BR	BRN.	NONE
18	MO-HLMS-BO SKA FRISCH, SISAK, YUGOSLAV A		N.Y. CITY	Y	SELF	Y	N	-	-	-	FR-DR.JOSEF KOVACS,CROY-DON HOTEL,NEW YORK CITY	N	PER. Y	N	N	N	NO	N	N	N GOOD	NO	5	11	LT	BR	BRN.	NONE
19	MO-BORISKA FRISCH, SISAK, YUGOSLAV A		N.Y. CITY	Y	SELF	Y	N	-	-	-	FR-DR. JOSEF KOVACS,CROY-DON HOTEL, NEW YORK CITY	N	PER. Y	N	N	N	NO	N	N	N GOOD	NO	5	7	LT	BR	BRN	NONE
20	GR.MO-BORISKA FRISCH, SISAK, YUGOSLAVIA		N.Y. CITY	Y	FATHER	Y	N	-	-	-	FR-DR.JOSEF KOVACS,CROY-DON HOTEL, NEW YORK	N	PER. Y	N	N	N	NO	N	N	N GOOD	NO	5	11	LT	BR	BRN.	NONE
21	GR.MO-BORISKA FRISCH, SISAK, YUGOSLAV A		N.Y. CITY	Y	FATHER	N	N	-	-	-	FR-DR. JOSEF KOVACS,CROY-DON HOTEL, NEW YORK CITY	N	PER. Y	N	N	N	NO	N	N	N GOOD	NO	4	3	LT	BR	BRN.	NONE
22	FA-A.BERT GROEDEL,COYASSNA, MARANESEL,HUNGARY	BRAZIL VIA N.Y.		Y	SELF	Y	N	-	-	-	BANKER-DOMENIC & DOMENIC. 115 BROADWAY, NEW YORK	N	NO. N	N	N	N	NO	N	N	N GOOD	NO	5	11	LT.	BR	BRN.	NONE
23	SON-A. HEINRICH, SJSAK, YUGOSLAVIA		N.Y. CITY	Y	DAUGHTER	Y	N	-	-	-	DO-VERA HEINR CH,640 W. END AVE., NEW YORK CITY	N	PER. Y	N	N	N	NO	N	N	N GOOD	NO	5	7	FR.	BR.	GRY	NONE
24	SON-A. HEINR CH, SJSAK, YUGOSLAVIA		N.Y. CITY	Y	DAUGHTER	Y	N	-	-	-	DO-VERA HEINR CH,640 W. END. AVE., NEW YORK C TY	N	PER. Y	N	N	N	NO	N	N	N GOOD	NO	5	5	FR.	BR	GRY.	NONE
25	ANT-EMELIA KNUDSEN ARAMAND, NORWAY	CANADA BY TRAIN		Y	FATHER	Y	N	-	-	-	FR-KARL FREGRIKSON, 155 N. APPLETON ST,ARLINGTON,MASS.	N	RKS N	N	N	N	NO	N	N	N GOOD	NO	5	7	LT.	LT	BLU.	NONE
26	FR.-PASPARTI BROS., ATHENS		N.Y. CITY	Y	SELF	Y	N	-	-	-	FR-CURT LOEWENBERG, 70 PINE ST., NEW YORK	N	PER Y	N	N	N	NO	N	N	N GOOD	NO	5	5	LT	BLK	BLU.	NONE
27	FR-PASPARTI BROS., ATHENS		N.Y. C TY	Y	SELF	Y	N	-	-	-	FR-CURT LOEWENBERG, 70 PINE ST., NEW YORK	N	PER Y	N	N	N	NO	N	N	N GOOD	NO	5	5	LT	LT	BRN.	NONE
28	FR-EBRMANN,PORTUGBE CONSUL ZAGREB, YUGO.		N.Y. CITY	Y	BROTHER	Y	N	-	-	-	BRO-FRANZ FISHEL, 9 E 96TH ST., NEW YORK	N	PER Y.	N	N	N	NO	N	N	N GOOD	NO	5	-	LT	BRN	BRN	NONE
29	BRO-IN-LAW-P.W.JUPP, 17 CASTELMAN GARDENS,.LONDON,ENG.	ENGLAND VIA N.Y.		N	SELF	Y	N	-	-	-	AGENT-GERONIMO LINE LTD. NEW YORK CITY	N	DRK Y	N	N	N	NO	N	N	N GOOD	NO	5	5½	FR.	BRN	BLU.	NONE
30	BRO-MUHAMAL BROS.,RENAK ST., BAGDAD		N.Y. CITY	Y	SELF	Y	N	-	-	-	FR-SYDNEY J. ROSENTHAL 226 W.26TH ST.,NEW YORK	N	PER Y	N	N	N	NO	N	N	N GOOD	NO	5	9½	FR	BLK	BRN.	NONE

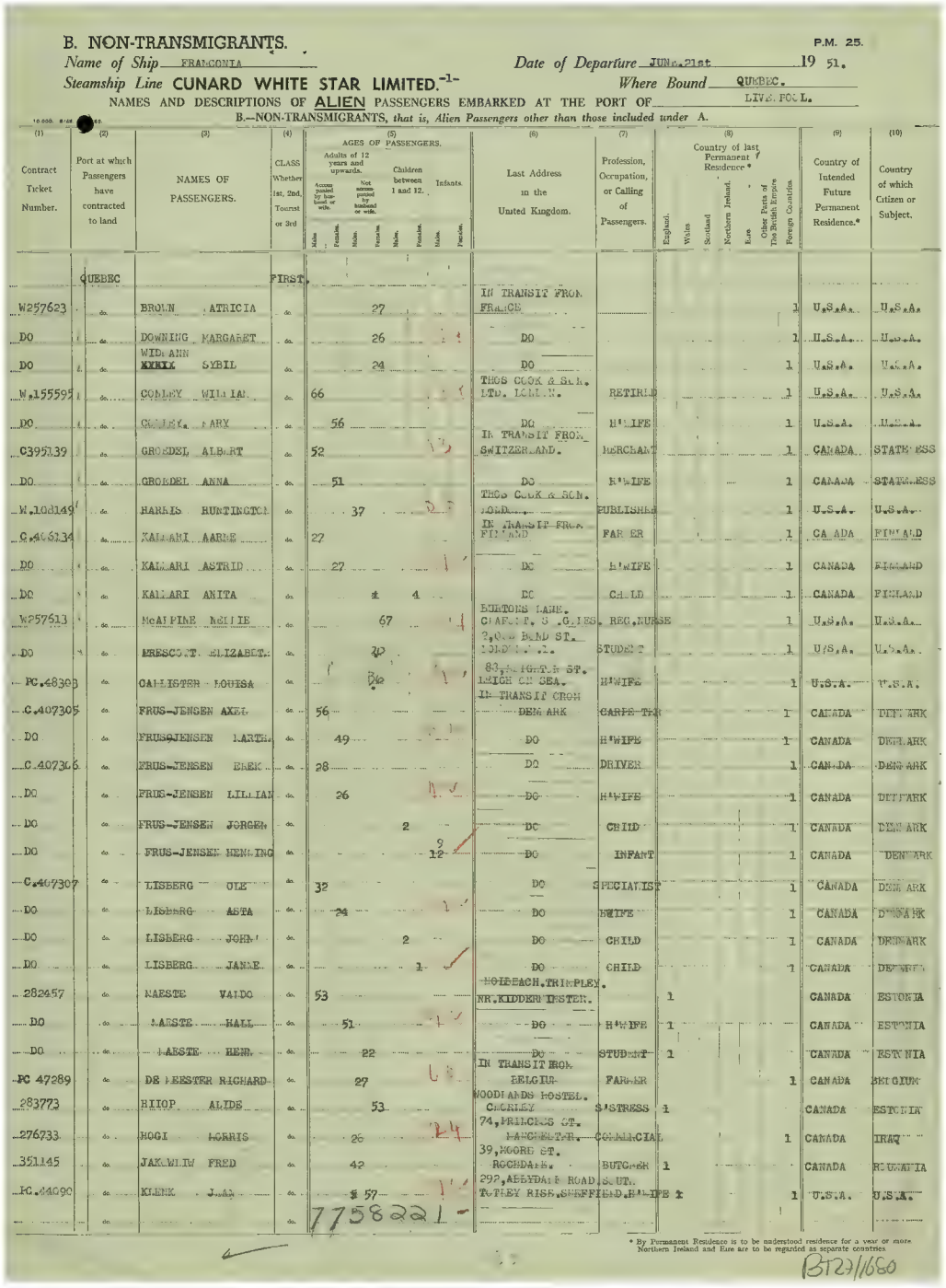
NOTE.—Full text of item 21 is as follows: Whether a person who believes in or advocates the overthrow by force or violence of the Government of the United States or of all forms of law, or who advocates or teaches the unlawful destruction of property, or is a member of or affiliated with any organization or group entertaining and teaching disbelief in or opposition to organized government or which teaches the unlawful destruction of property, or who advocates or teaches the duty, necessity, or propriety of the unlawful assaulting or killing of any officer or officers, either of specific individuals or officers generally, of the Government of the United States or of any other organized government.

Line, AMERICAN PRESIDENT LINES
Owners AMERICAN PRESIDENT LINES
Local Agents AMERICAN PRESIDENT LINES

Page 2

Albert and Anna Groedel:

1951 to Canada



B. NON-TRANSMIGRANTS. P.M. 25.

Name of Ship FRANCONIA *Date of Departure* JUNE 21st 19 51.

Steamship Line CUNARD WHITE STAR LIMITED. *Where Bound* QUEBEC.

NAMES AND DESCRIPTIONS OF ALIEN PASSENGERS EMBARKED AT THE PORT OF LIVERPOOL.

B.—NON-TRANSMIGRANTS, *that is, Alien Passengers other than those included under A.*

(1) Contract Ticket Number.	(2) Port at which Passengers have contracted to land	(3) NAMES OF PASSENGERS.	(4) CLASS Whether 1st, 2nd, Tourist or 3rd	(5) AGES OF PASSENGERS. Adults of 12 years and upwards. Accompanied by husband or wife. Males.	Females.	Not accompanied by husband or wife. Males.	Females.	Children between 1 and 12. Males.	Females.	Infants. Males.	Females.	(6) Last Address in the United Kingdom.	(7) Profession, Occupation, or Calling of Passengers.	(8) Country of last Permanent Residence.* England.	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland.	Eire	Other Parts of The British Empire	Foreign Countries.	(9) Country of Intended Future Permanent Residence.*	(10) Country of which Citizen or Subject.
	QUEBEC		FIRST.																			
W257623	do.	BROWN PATRICIA	do.		27							IN TRANSIT FROM FRANCE								1	U.S.A.	U.S.A.
DO	do.	DOWNING MARGARET	do.		26							DO								1	U.S.A.	U.S.A.
DO	do.	WID. ANN KEELL SYBIL	do.		24							DO								1	U.S.A.	U.S.A.
W.155595	do.	COOLEY WILLIAM	do.	66								THOS COOK & SON LTD. LONDON.	RETIRED							1	U.S.A.	U.S.A.
DO	do.	COOLEY MARY	do.		56							DO	H'WIFE							1	U.S.A.	U.S.A.
C395139	do.	GROEDEL ALBERT	do.	52								IN TRANSIT FROM SWITZERLAND.	MERCHANT							1	CANADA	STATELESS
DO	do.	GROEDEL ANNA	do.		51							DO	H'WIFE							1	CANADA	STATELESS
W.108149	do.	HARRIS HUNTINGTON	do.		37							THOS COOK & SON. LOND...	PUBLISHER							1	U.S.A.	U.S.A.
C.406134	do.	KALLARI AARNE	do.	27								IN TRANSIT FROM FINLAND	FARMER							1	CANADA	FINLAND
DO	do.	KALLARI ASTRID	do.		27							DO	H'WIFE							1	CANADA	FINLAND
DO	do.	KALLARI ANITA	do.			4						DO	CHILD							1	CANADA	FINLAND
W257613	do.	McALPINE NELLIE	do.		67							BURTONS LANE. CHARLES G. GILES.	REG.NURSE							1	U.S.A.	U.S.A.
DO	do.	PRESCOTT ELIZABETH	do.		20							2,0... ROAD ST. LOND...	STUDENT							1	U/S.A.	U.S.A.
PC.48308	do.	CALLISTER LOUISA	do.		62							83,... ST. LEIGH ON SEA.	H'WIFE							1	U.S.A.	U.S.A.
C.407305	do.	FRUS-JENSEN AXEL	do.	56								IN TRANSIT FROM DENMARK	CARPENTER							1	CANADA	DENMARK
DO	do.	FRUSJENSEN MARTHA	do.		49							DO	H'WIFE							1	CANADA	DENMARK
C.407306	do.	FRUS-JENSEN ERIK	do.	28								DO	DRIVER							1	CANADA	DENMARK
DO	do.	FRUS-JENSEN LILLIAN	do.		26							DO	H'WIFE							1	CANADA	DENMARK
DO	do.	FRUS-JENSEN JORGEN	do.					2				DO	CHILD							1	CANADA	DENMARK
DO	do.	FRUS-JENSEN HENNING	do.							12		DO	INFANT							1	CANADA	DENMARK
C.407307	do.	LISBERG OLE	do.	32								DO	SPECIALIST							1	CANADA	DENMARK
DO	do.	LISBERG ASTA	do.		24							DO	WIFE							1	CANADA	DENMARK
DO	do.	LISBERG JOHN	do.					2				DO	CHILD							1	CANADA	DENMARK
DO	do.	LISBERG JANNE	do.						1			DO	CHILD							1	CANADA	DENMARK
282457	do.	NAESTE VALDO	do.	53								HOLBEACH, TRIMPLEY. NR. KIDDERMINSTER.			1						CANADA	ESTONIA
DO	do.	NAESTE HALL	do.		51							DO	H'WIFE		1						CANADA	ESTONIA
DO	do.	NAESTE HEM	do.		22							DO	STUDENT		1						CANADA	ESTONIA
PC 47289	do.	DE MEESTER RICHARD	do.		27							IN TRANSIT FROM BELGIUM	FARMER							1	CANADA	BELGIUM
283773	do.	HIIOP ALIDE	do.		53							WOODLANDS HOSTEL. CHORLEY	MISTRESS	1							CANADA	ESTONIA
276733	do.	HOGI LORRIS	do.		26							74, PRINCES ST. MANCHESTER.	COMMERCIAL							1	CANADA	IRAQ
351145	do.	JAKOWLEW FRED	do.		42							39, MOORE ST. ROCHDALE.	BUTCHER	1							CANADA	ROUMANIA
PC.44090	do.	KLENK JOAN	do.		57							292, ABBYDALE ROAD, SOUTH. TOTLEY RISE, SHEFFIELD.	H'WIFE	1						1	U.S.A.	U.S.A.
	do.		do.																			

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* By Permanent Residence is to be understood residence for a year or more. Northern Ireland and Eire are to be regarded as separate countries.

BT27/1680

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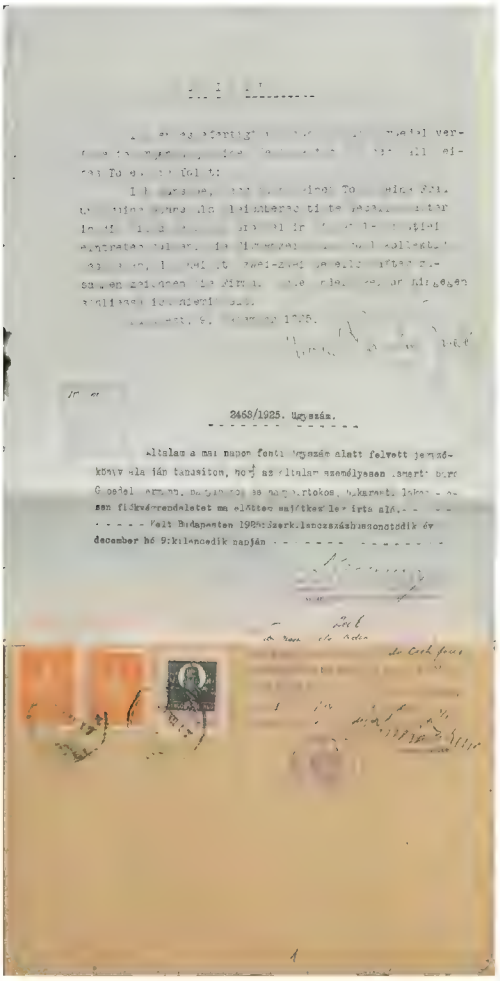
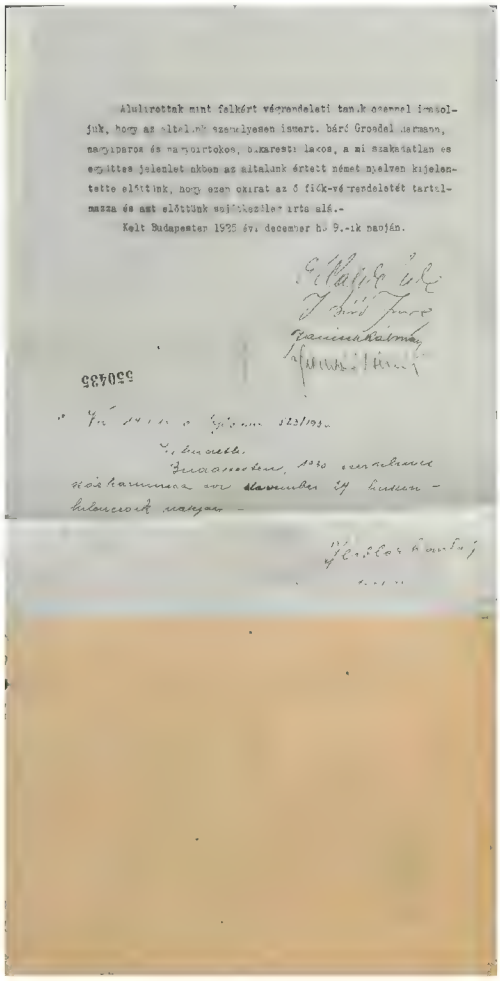
HERMANN'S CODICILS

December 9, 1925



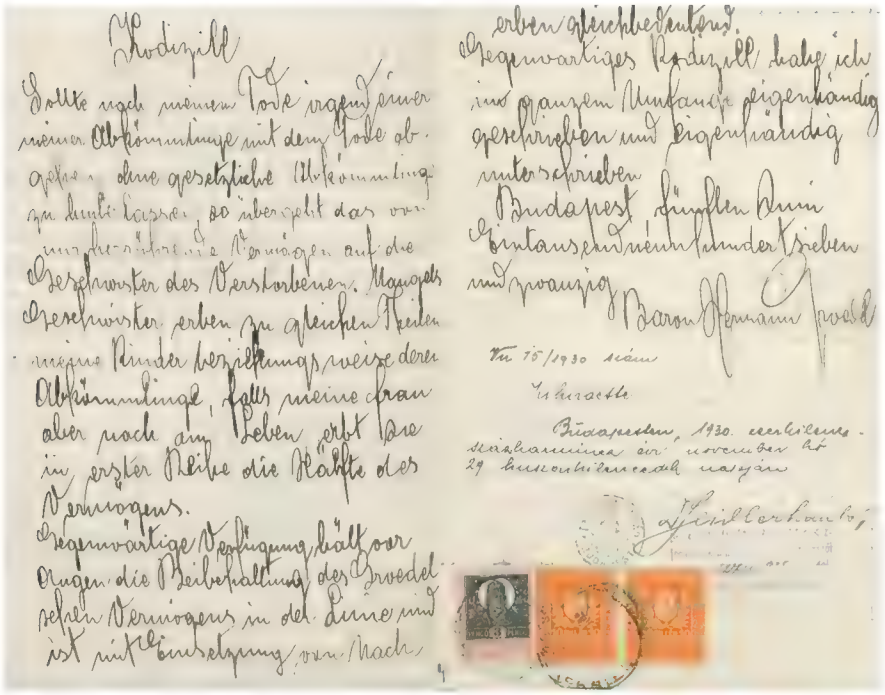


I, Baron Hermann Groedel, being of final age, in addition to my last will and testament, decree in the event of my death as follows: It is my wish that after my death my wife and my sons shall join the company Gebrüder Groedel in Skole - Demnia-wyzna as partners with full rights. The company signature shall be done collectively, i.e. two-two partners together sign for the company. I hereby exclude any other person.

Ich endesgefertigter Baron Hermann Groedel verfüge in Ergänzung meines Testamentes für den Fall meines Todes wie folgt:

Ich wünsche, dass nach meinem Tode meine Frau und meine Söhne als gleichberechtigte Gesellschafter in die Firma Gebrüder Groedel in Sighetul-Marmatiei eintreten sollen. Die Firmenzeichnung soll kollektiv geschehen, das heisst zwei-zwei Gesellschafter zusammen zeichnen die Firma. Jede andere Person hingegen schliesse ich hiemit aus.

June 5, 1927



Should, after my death, any of my descendants pass away without leaving legal descendants, the estate inherited from me shall pass to the siblings of the deceased. In the absence of siblings, my children or their descendants inherit in equal parts, but if my wife is still alive, she inherits primarily half of the property. The present disposition envisages the retention of Groedel's assets in the line and is equivalent to the establishment of an inheritance.

I have written the entirety of the present codicil by hand and signed it by hand.
Budapest, June fifth, nineteen hundred and twenty-seven

Kodizill

Sollte nach meinen Tode irgend einer meiner Abkommlinge mit dem Tode abgehen ohne gesetzliche Abkommlinge zu hinter lassen so ubergeht das von mir herrnhrende Vermogen auf die Geschwister des Verstorbenen. Mangels Geschwister erben zu gleichen Theilen meine Kinder beziehungs weise deren Abkommlinge, falls meine frau aber nach am Leben erbt sie im erster Keihe die Halfte des Vermogens. Gegenwartige Verfügung hält vur Augen die Beibehaltung des Groedel sehen Vermogens in der Line und ist mit Einsetzung von nach, erben gleichbedentend.

Gegenwartiges Kodizill habe ich mit gauzem Umfange eigenhandig geschrieben und eigenhandig unterschrieben.

Budapest, funften Juni Eintausendneinhundert sieben un zwanzig

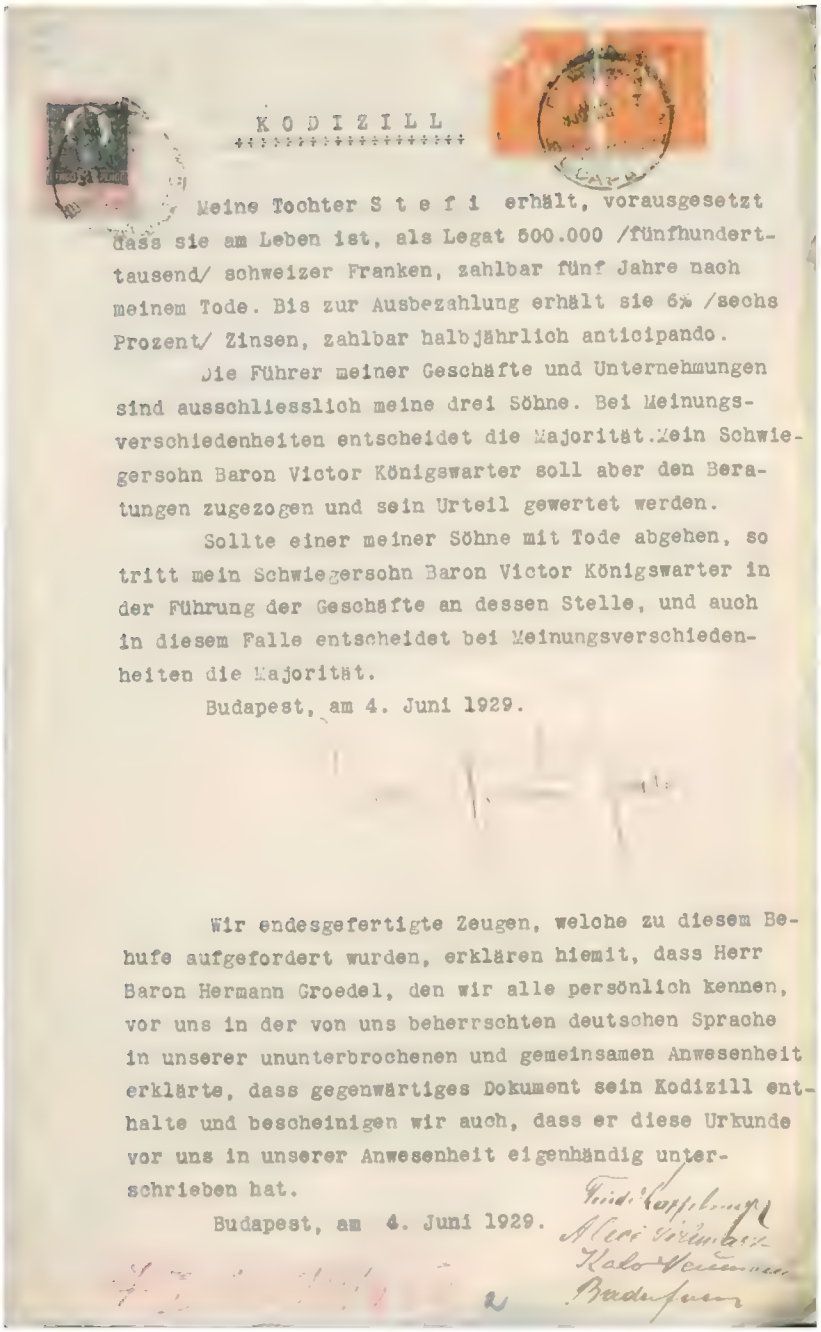
June 4, 1929

In partial modification of my previous dispositions in the event of death, I hereby determine:

1/. If my daughters or their spouses are not working in a company of the Groedel Group when I die, /such as Baron is currently doing Victor Königswarter is active/ so they cannot influence the course of business in any way whatsoever.

2/. My daughters have no right to claim the division of their inheritance unless all my heirs agree unanimously. - If one of my daughters contests this order, she will be placed on the compulsory portion, and she can only take this compulsory portion in equal installments every 10/ten years.

We finished witnesses, who were summoned for this purpose, hereby declare that Mr. Baron Hermann Groedel, whom we all know personally, declared before us in the German language, which we speak, in our uninterrupted and common presence, that the present document contains his codicil and we also certify that he personally signed this document in front of us in our presence.



K O D I Z I L L

Meine Tochter S t e f i erhält, vorausgesetzt dass sie am Leben ist, als Legat 500.000 /fünfhunderttausend/ schweizer Franken, zahlbar fünf Jahre nach meinem Tode. Bis zur Ausbezahlung erhält sie 6% /sechs Prozent/ Zinsen, zahlbar halbjährlich anticipando.

Die Führer meiner Geschäfte und Unternehmungen sind ausschliesslich meine drei Söhne. Bei Meinungsverschiedenheiten entscheidet die Majorität. Mein Schwiegersohn Baron Victor Königswarter soll aber den Beratungen zugezogen und sein Urteil gewertet werden.

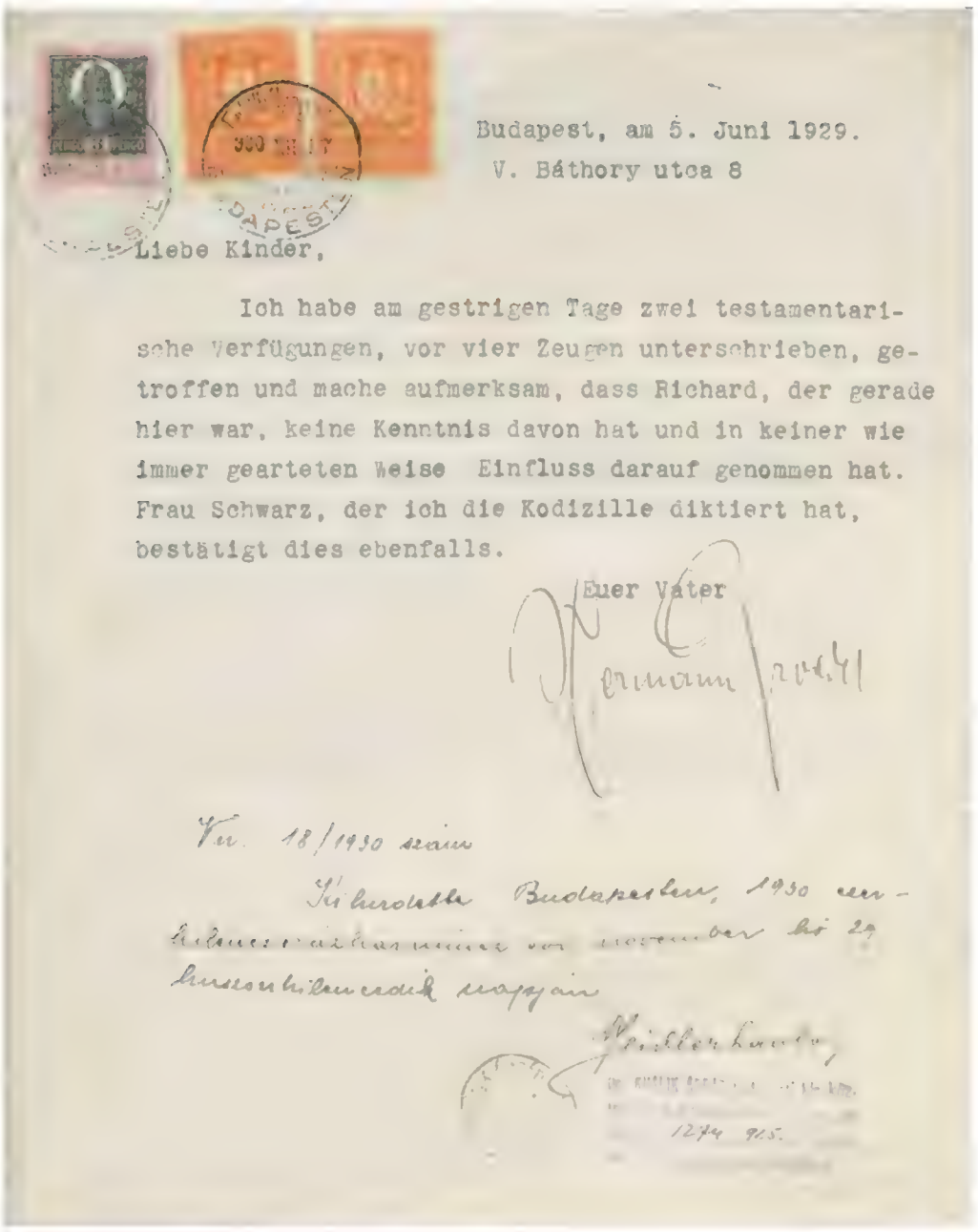
Sollte einer meiner Söhne mit Tode abgehen, so tritt mein Schwiegersohn Baron Victor Königswarter in der Führung der Geschäfte an dessen Stelle, und auch in diesem Falle entscheidet bei Meinungsverschiedenheiten die Majorität.

Budapest, am 4. Juni 1929.

Wir endesgefertigte Zeugen, welche zu diesem Behufe aufgefordert wurden, erklären hiemit, dass Herr Baron Hermann Groedel, den wir alle persönlich kennen, vor uns in der von uns beherrschten deutschen Sprache in unserer ununterbrochenen und gemeinsamen Anwesenheit erklärte, dass gegenwärtiges Dokument sein Kodizill enthalte und bescheinigen wir auch, dass er diese Urkunde vor uns in unserer Anwesenheit eigenhändig unterschrieben hat.

Budapest, am 4. Juni 1929.

June 5, 1929



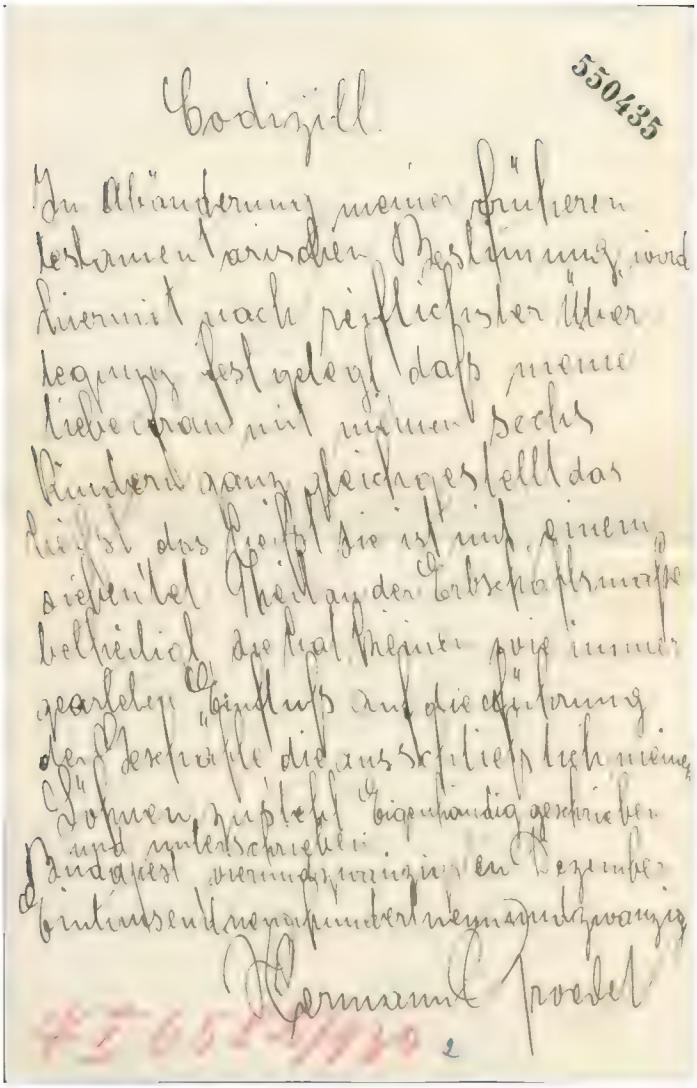
Budapest, am 5. Juni 1929.
V. Báthory utca 8

Liebe Kinder,

Ich habe am gestrigen Tage zwei testamentarische Verfügungen, vor vier Zeugen unterschrieben, getroffen und mache aufmerksam, dass Richard, der gerade hier war, keine Kenntnis davon hat und in keiner wie immer gearteten Weise Einfluss darauf genommen hat. Frau Schwarz, der ich die Kodizille diktiert hat, bestätigt dies ebenfalls.

Euer Vater

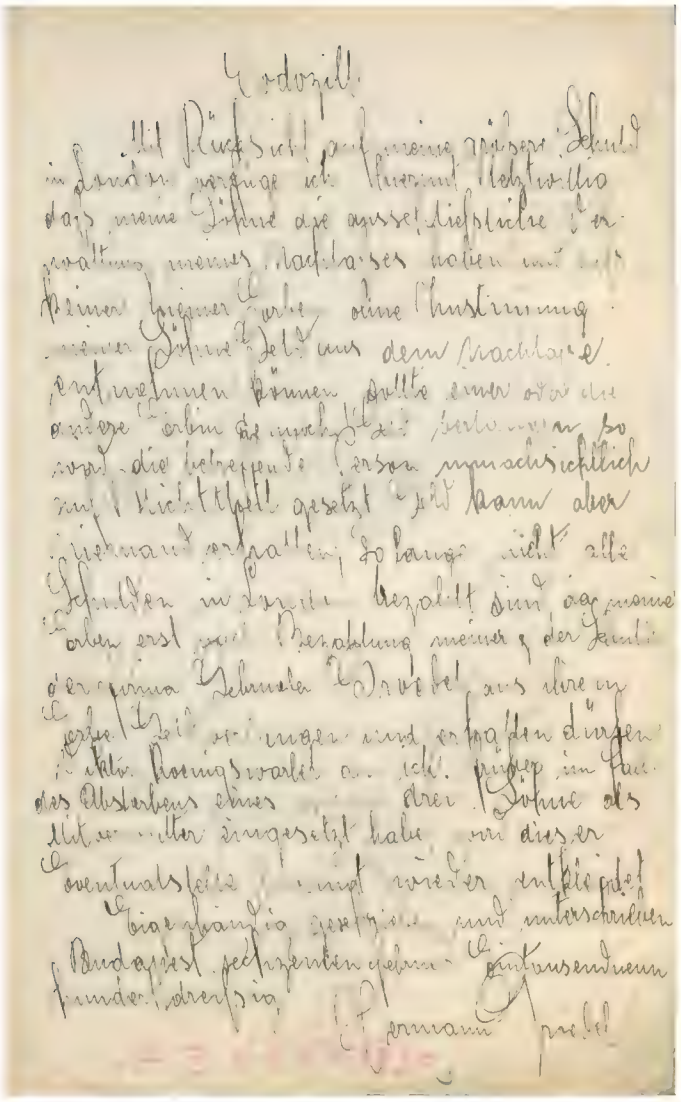
I made two wills yesterday, signed in front of four witnesses, and I draw your attention to the fact that Richard, who was here just now, is not aware of them and has not influenced them in any way whatsoever. Frau Schwarz, to whom I dictated the codicil, also confirms this.



December 24, 1929

In a modification of my earlier testamentary stipulation, it is hereby determined after careful consideration that my dear wife and my six children are on an equal footing, which means that she has a one-seventh share of the inheritance. She has no influence whatsoever on the management of the Business that belongs exclusively to my sons. Written in my own hand in Budapest and signed on December 22, one thousand nine hundred and twenty-nineCODICIL.

February 6, 1930



In consideration of my greater debt in London, I hereby decree that my sons, who have the exclusive administration of my estate, and that none of my heirs can withdraw money from the estate without the consent of my sons, should one or the other heir nevertheless demand money, the person concerned is ruthlessly placed on a compulsory portion. But no one can receive money until all debts in London have been paid, since my heirs can only demand and receive money from their inheritance after mine and the debts of the Groedel brothers have been paid, Viktor Königswarter, whom I used to give in the event of the death of one of my three sons as co-administrators, this contingent position is hereby revoked.

Handwritten and signed. Budapest, sixteenth February one thousand nine hundred and thirty.
Hermann Groedel m.p.

CODIZILL.

Mit Rücksicht auf meine grössere Schuld in London, verfüge ich hiemit letztwillig, dass meine Söhne, die ausschliessliche Verwaltung meines Nachlasses haben und dass keiner meiner Erben ohne Zustimmung meiner Söhne Geld aus dem Nachlasse entnehmen können, sollte einer oder die andere Erbin dennoch Geld verlangen, so wird die betreffende Person unnachsichtlich auf Pflichtteil gesetzt. Geld kann aber niemand erhalten, solange nicht alle Schulden in London bezahlt sind, da meine Erben erst nach Bezahlung meiner und der Schulden der Firma Gebrüder Groedel aus ihrem Erbe Geld verlangen und erhalten dürfen. Viktor Königswarter, den ich früher im Falle des Absterbens eines meiner drei Söhne als Mitverwalter eingesetzt habe, wird dieser Eventualstelle hiermit wieder entkleidet.

Eigenhändig geschrieben und unterschrieben. Budapest, sechszenten Februar eintausendneunhundertdreissig.

In a previous codicil I decreed that I would give my granddaughter Zora v. Kussevich a legacy of 200,000 sv. Franconia bequeathed. I hereby amend this my decree in such a way that I reduce the amount of the legacy to 50,000 /:fifty thousand:/ francs.

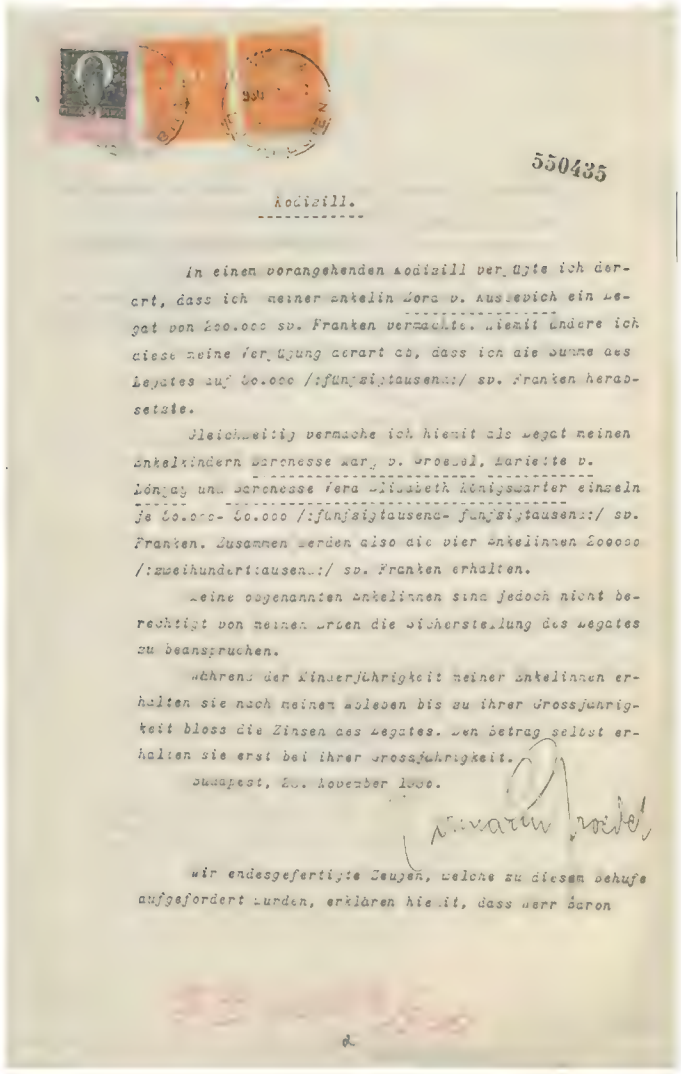
At the same time, I hereby bequeath my grandchildren Baroness Mary v. Groedel, Mariette v. Lónyay and Baroness Vera Elisabeth Königswarter individually each 50,000 - 50,000 /: fifty thousand - fifty thousand: / sv. francs. So together the four granddaughters will be 200,000 /:two hundred thousand:/ sv. received francs.

However, my above-mentioned granddaughters are not entitled to claim the security of the legacy from my heirs.

While my granddaughters are minors, after my death they only receive the interest on the legacy until they come of age. They only receive the amount themselves when they come of age.

Budapest, November 28, 1930.

November 28, 1930



550435

Kodizill.

In einem vorangehenden Kodizill verfügte ich derart, dass ich meiner Enkelin Zora v. Kussevich ein Legat von 200.000 sv. Franken vermachte. Hiemit ändere ich diese meine Verfügung derart ab, dass ich die Summe des Legates auf 50.000 /:fünfzigtausend:/ sv. Franken herabsetze.

Gleichzeitig vermache ich hiemit als Legat meinen Enkelkindern Baronesse Mary v. Groedel, Mariette v. Lónyay und Baronesse Vera Elisabeth Königswarter einzeln je 50.000- 50.000 /:fünfzigtausend- fünfzigtausend:/ sv. Franken. Zusammen werden also die vier Enkelinnen 200000 /:zweihundertausend:/ sv. Franken erhalten.

Meine obgenannten Enkelinnen sind jedoch nicht berechtigt von meinen Erben die Sicherstellung des Legates zu beanspruchen.

Während der Minderjährigkeit meiner Enkelinnen erhalten sie nach meinem Ableben bis zu ihrer Grossjährigkeit bloss die Zinsen des Legates. Den Betrag selbst erhalten sie erst bei ihrer Grossjährigkeit.

Budapest, 28. November 1930.

Wir endesgefertigte Zeugen, welche zu diesem Behufe aufgefordert wurden, erklären hiemit, dass Herr Baron

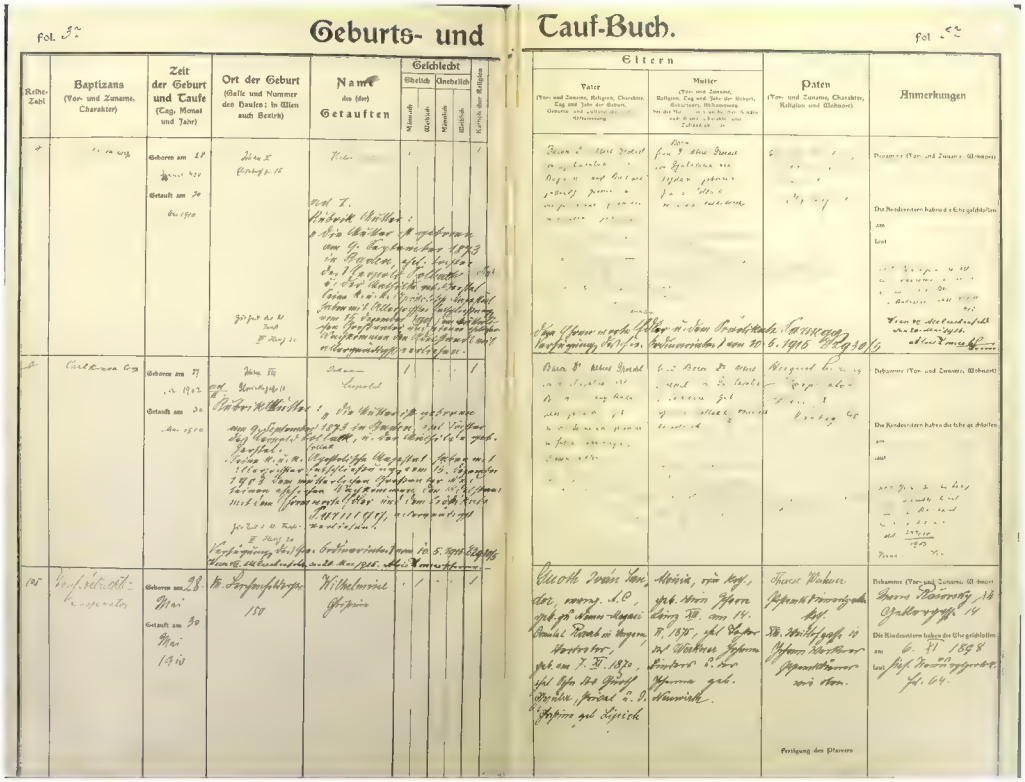
CONVERSION DOCUMENTS

Converts from Judaism: 1915-1945

Searching for Surname (phonetically like) : GROEDEL
2 matching records found.
Run on Fri, 02 Feb 2024 10:21:23 -0700

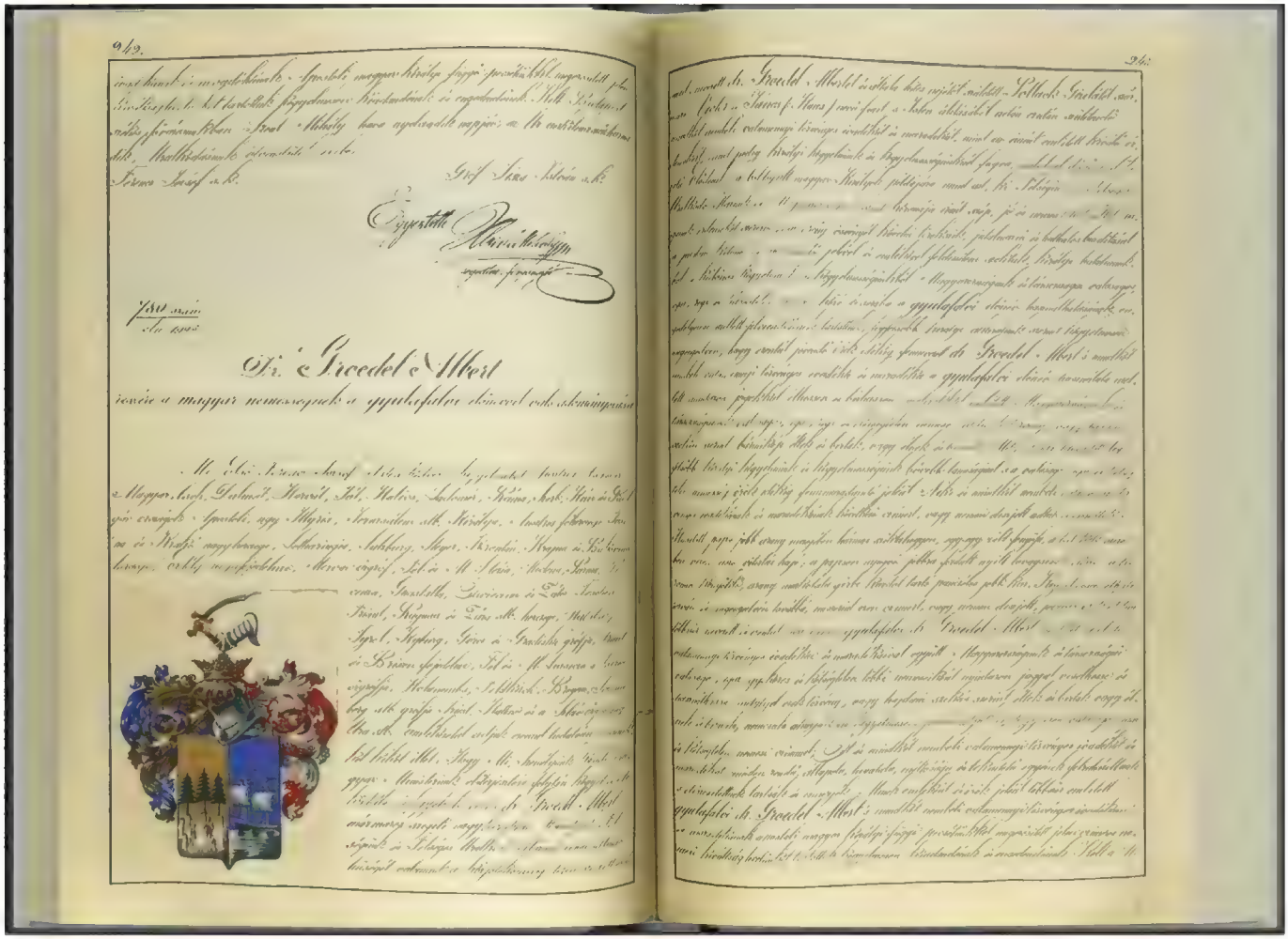
Number / Date	Name	Birth Name / Age	Date of Birth / Place of Birth	Marital Status / Occupation	Vienna Address	Religion / Note
733 / 07/29/1919	**Groedel, Baron**, Hermann	63	07.04.1856 / Friedberg	verh. / Großindustrieller	4 Prinz Eugenstr. 18	
961 / 09/16/1919	**Groedel**, Bernhard	0	03/04/1919 / Friedberg	verh. / Industrieller	1 Hotel Bristol	

Viktor Albert and Janos Leopold Groedel

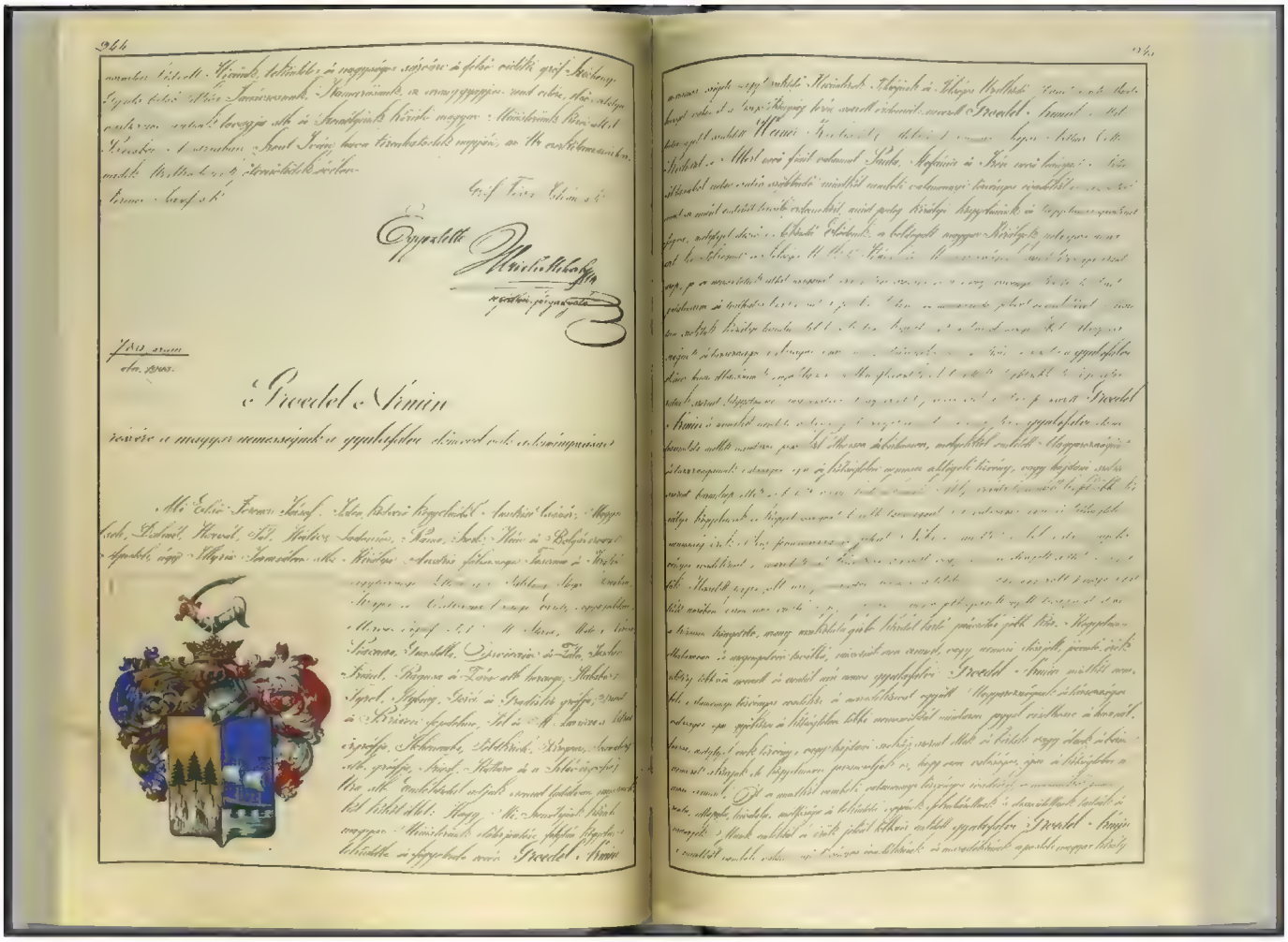


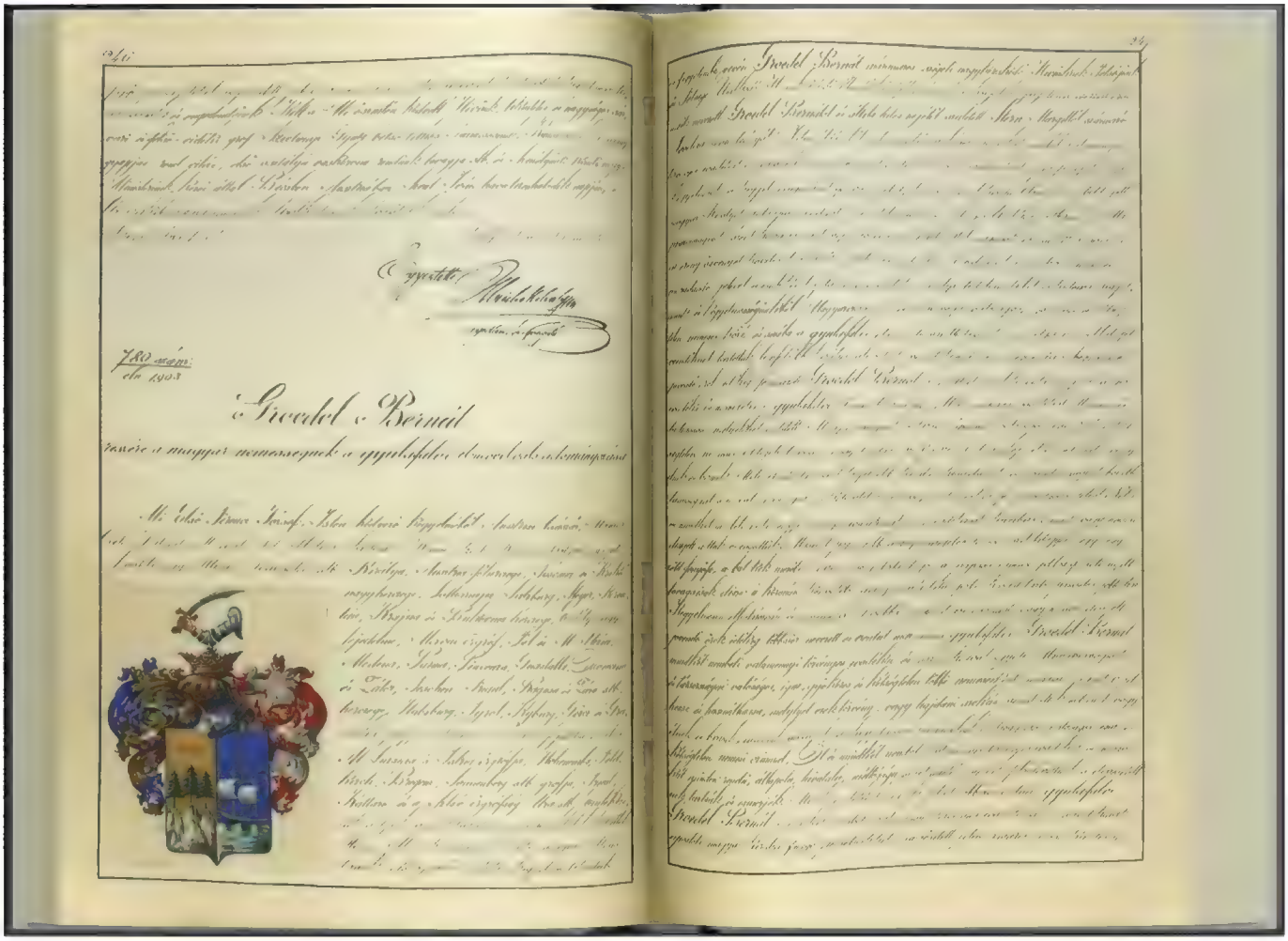
Conversions of Viktor Albert and Janos Leopold Groedel May 30, 1910

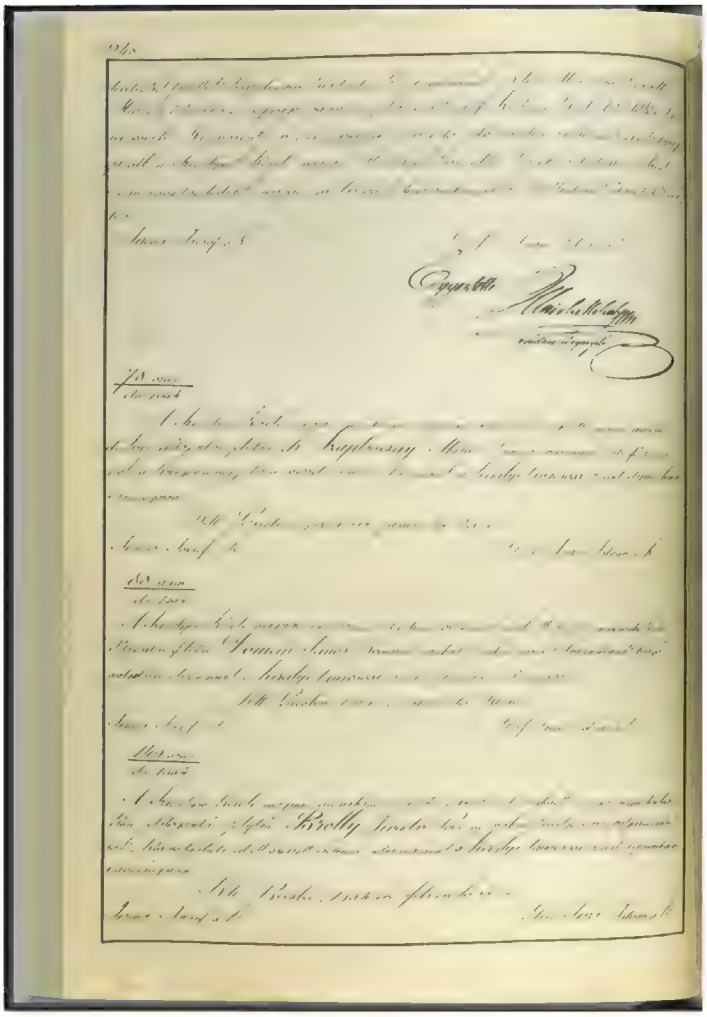
PATENTS OF NOBILITY[132]

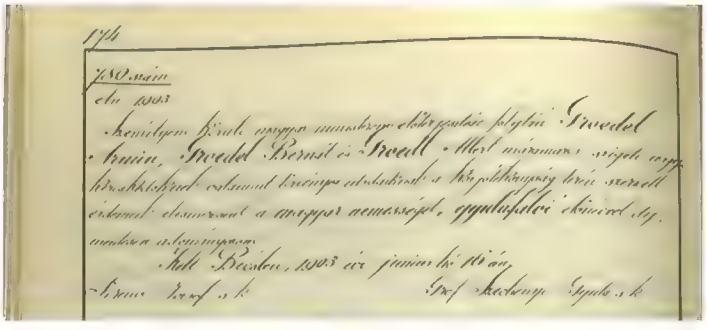


[132] *https://archives.hungaricana.hu/en/libriregii/view/hu_mnl_ol_a057_71_0254/?image=0&pg=242&bbox=-1015%2C-1989%2C2535%2C-53*









HOLOCAUST ERA DOCUMENTS

Albert: Yad Vashem

The Central Database of Shoah Victims' Names

ALBERT GROEDEL

Albert Groedel. Prior to WWII he lived in Kommando, Romania.

Albert was murdered in the Shoah (according to this source).

This information is based on a List of persecuted persons, found in Lists of Jews who were deported from Sepsiszentgyörgy, Kézdivásárhely and additional towns in the surrounding area with a mention of the victims' fate, taken from a memorial book.

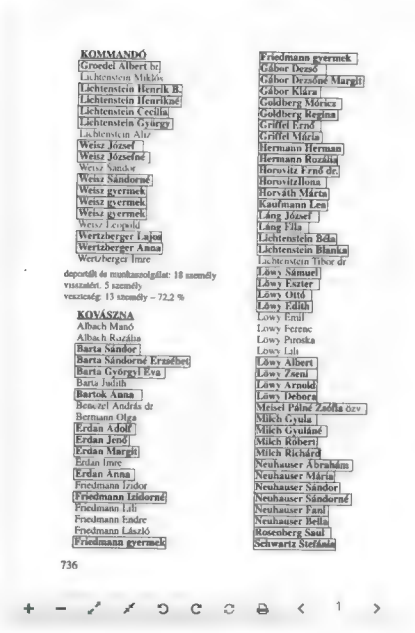
Map

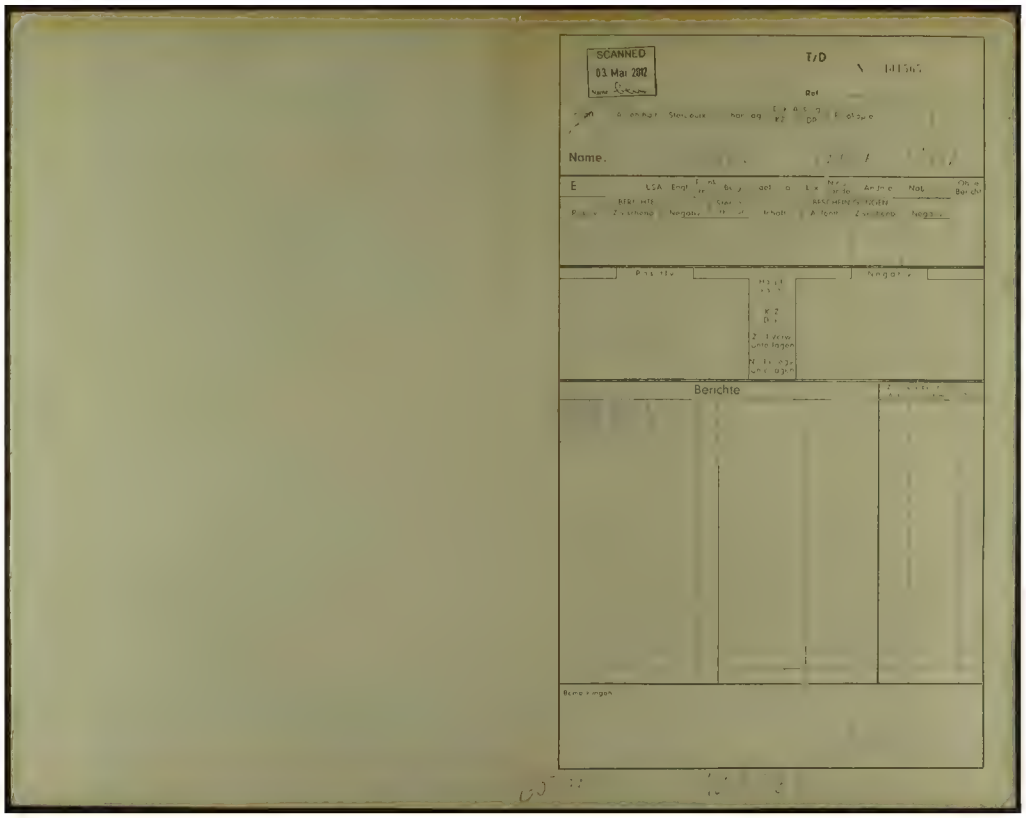
During the Shoah, Jews were murdered in a variety of ways, among them gassing, shooting, burning, drowning or burial alive, exhaustion through forced labor, starvation, epidemic diseases, deprivation of medical care and minimal hygienic conditions, and more. Some Jews took their own lives in order to escape arrest and further persecution, or to end their hopeless, relentless suffering.

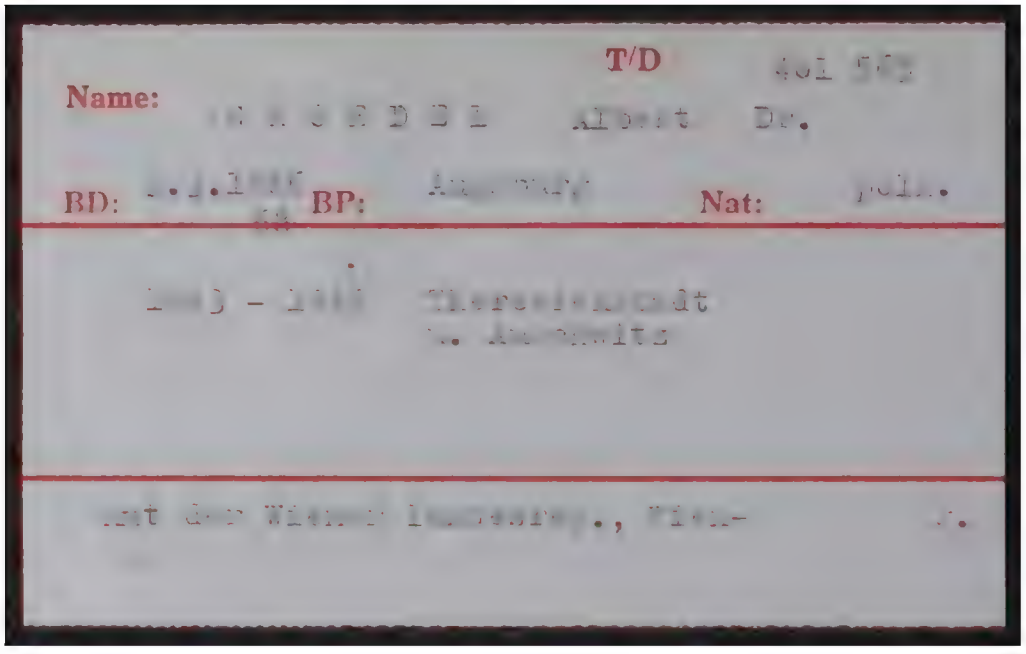
Submit Additions/Corrections

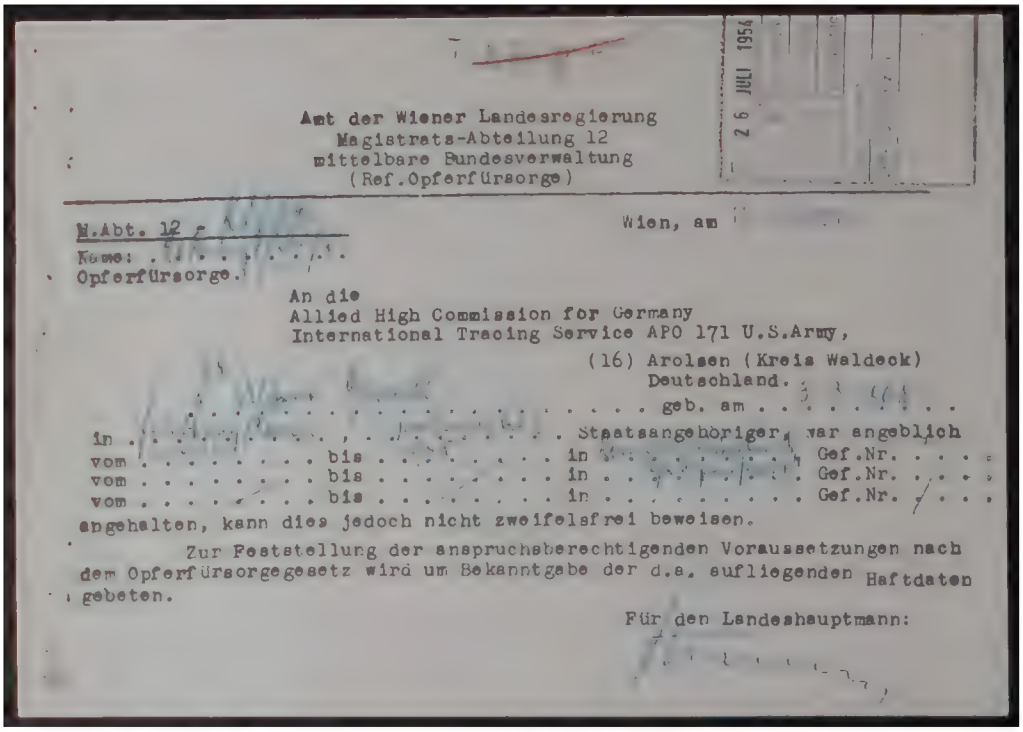
Last Name	Groedel
First Name	Albert
Gender	Male
Permanent Place of Residence	Kommando,Trei Scaune,Transylvania,Romania
Status according to Source	murdered
Source	Lists of Jews who were deported from Sepsiszentgyörgy, Kézdivásárhely and additional towns in the surrounding area with a mention of the victims' fate, taken from a memorial book
Type of material	List of persecuted persons
Item ID	11044025

* Automatic translation from Hebrew




SCANNED
03 Mar 2012
T/D
Name.
Berichte


T/D
Name:
Albert Dr.
BD:
BP:
Nat:
pol.



Amt der Wiener Landesregierung
Magistrats-Abteilung 12
mittelbare Bundesverwaltung
(Ref. Opferfürsorge)

26 JULI 1954

M.Abt. 12 -
Name:
Opferfürsorge.

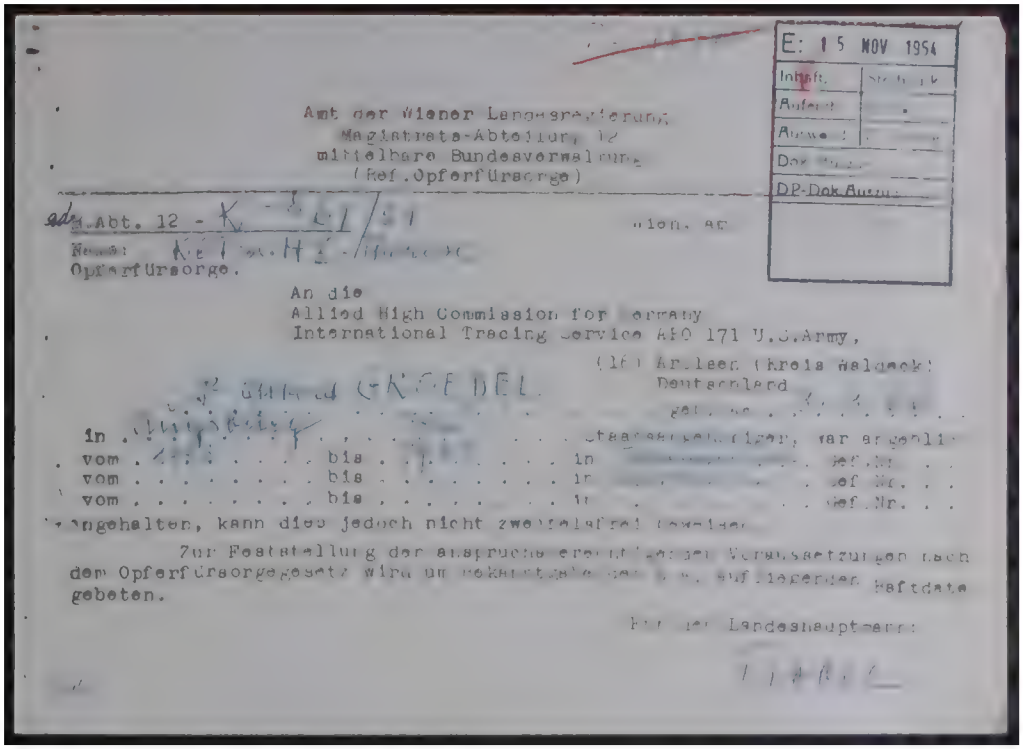
Wien, am

An die
Allied High Commission for Germany
International Tracing Service APO 171 U.S.Army,
(16) Arolsen (Kreis Waldeck)
Deutschland.

. . . . . geb. am . . . . . .
in . . . . . Staatsangehöriger, war angeblich
vom . . . . . bis . . . . . in . . . . . Gef.Nr. . . . .
vom . . . . . bis . . . . . in . . . . . Gef.Nr. . . . .
vom . . . . . bis . . . . . in . . . . . Gef.Nr. . . . .
angehalten, kann dies jedoch nicht zweifelsfrei beweisen.

Zur Feststellung der anspruchsberechtigenden Voraussetzungen nach dem Opferfürsorgegesetz wird um Bekanntgabe der d.a. aufliegenden Haftdaten gebeten.

Für den Landeshauptmann:



E: 15 NOV 1954
Inhalt
Auftrag
Auswahl
Dok.
DP-Dok.Ausw.

Amt der Wiener Landesregierung
Magistrats-Abteilung 12
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in . . . . . Staatsangehöriger, war angeblich
vom . . . . . bis . . . . . in . . . . . Gef.Nr. . . .
vom . . . . . bis . . . . . in . . . . . Gef.Nr. . . .
vom . . . . . bis . . . . . in . . . . . Gef.Nr. . . .
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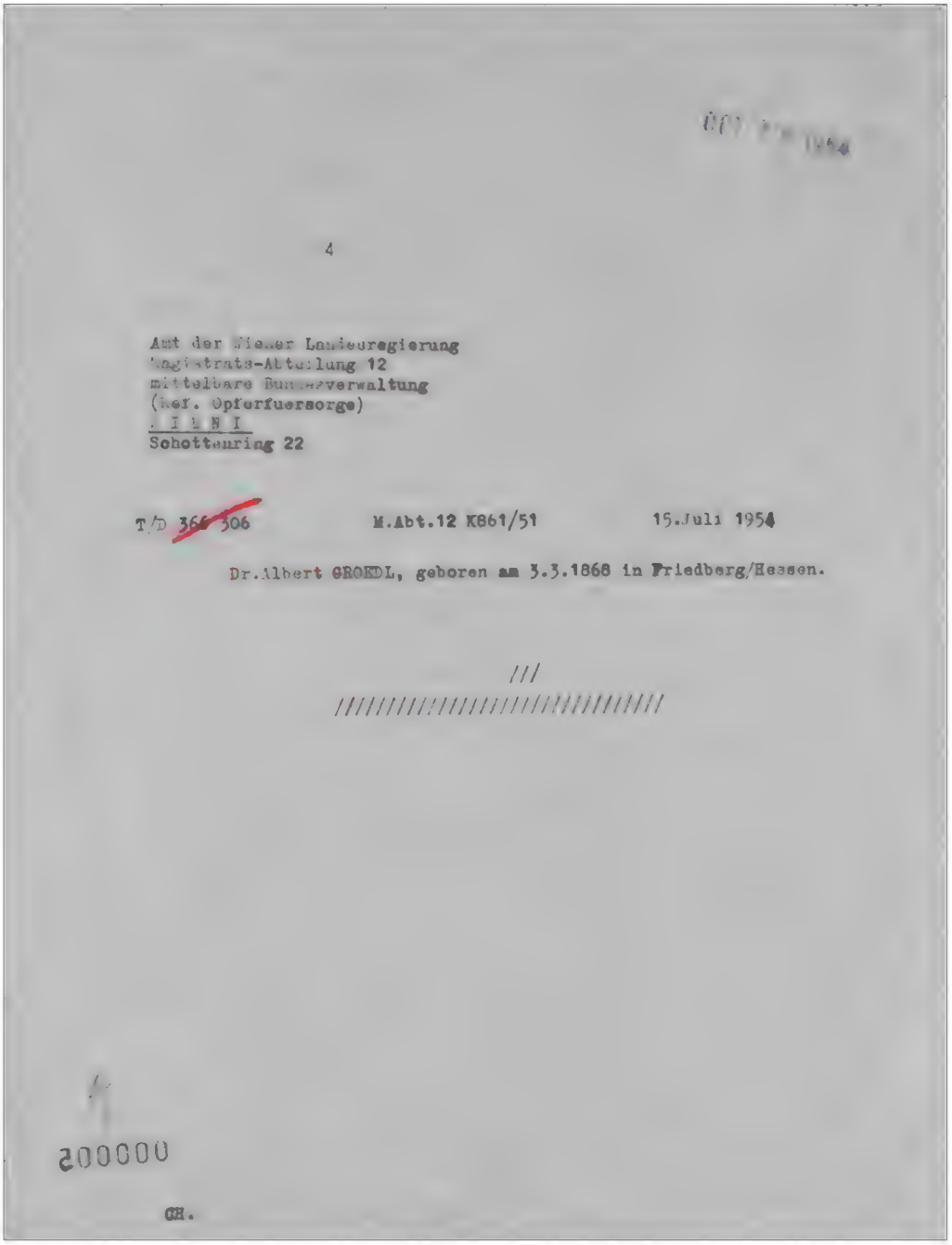


4

Amt der Wiener Landesregierung
Magistrats-Abteilung 12
mittelbare Bundesverwaltung
(Ref. Opferfuersorge)
W I E N I
Schottenring 22

T/D 366 306 M.Abt.12 K861/51 15.Juli 1954

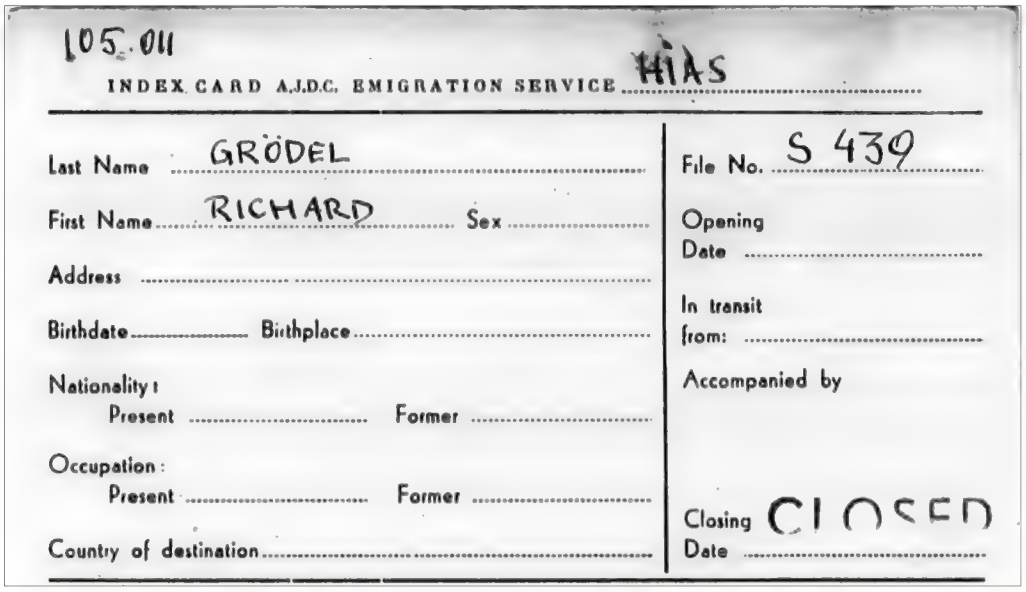
Dr.Albert GROEDL, geboren am 3.3.1868 in Friedberg/Hessen.

///
//////////////////////////////

200000

CH.

Richard's HIAS File



105.011

INDEX CARD A.J.D.C. EMIGRATION SERVICE HIAS

Last Name GRÖDEL

First Name RICHARD Sex

Address

Birthdate Birthplace

Nationality: Present Former

Occupation: Present Former

Country of destination

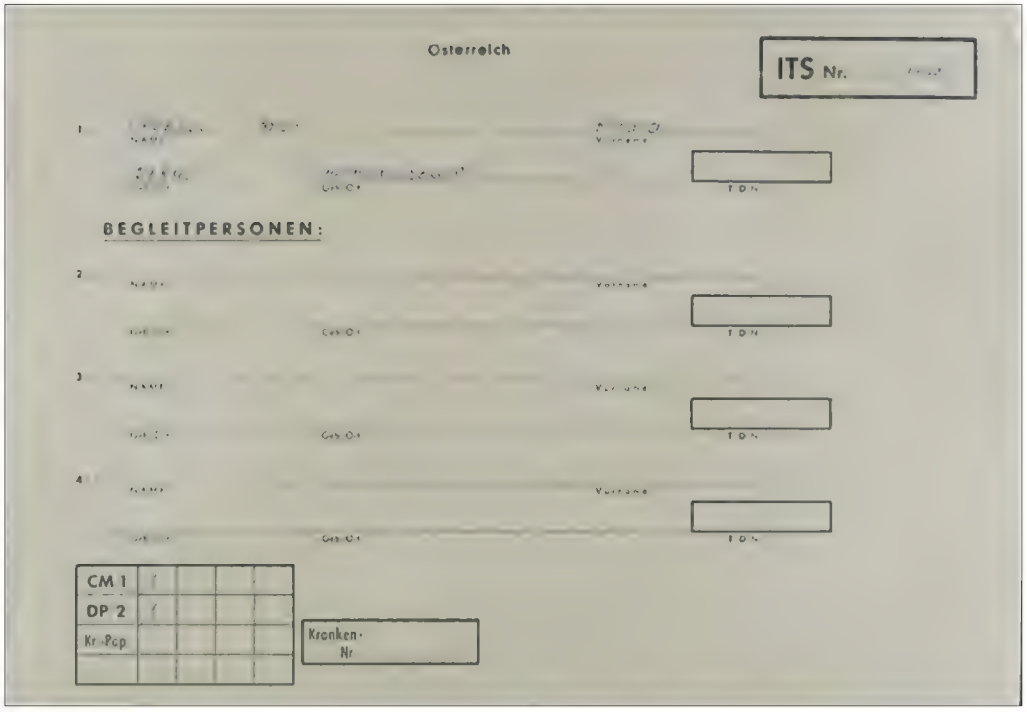
File No. S 439

Opening Date

In transit from:

Accompanied by

Closing Date CLOSED



Österreich

ITS Nr.

TBN

BEGLEITPERSONEN:

TBN

TBN

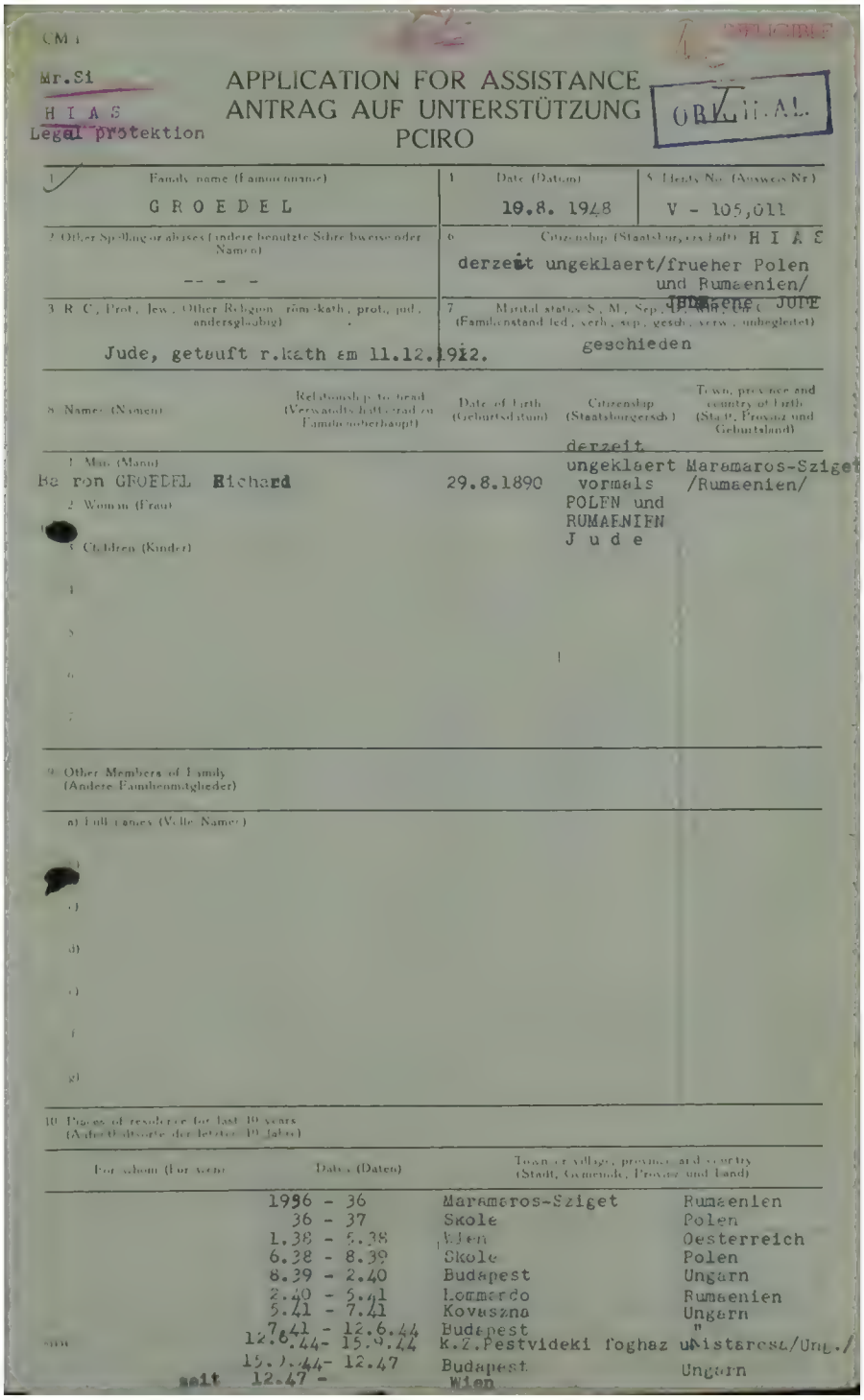
TBN

CM 1

DP 2

Kr.-Pap

Kranken-Nr



CM 1

Mr.Si

H I A S
Legal protektion

APPLICATION FOR ASSISTANCE
ANTRAG AUF UNTERSTÜTZUNG
PCIRO

ORIGINAL

1 Family name (Familienname)	4 Date (Datum)	5 Hefty No. (Ausweis Nr.)
G R O E D E L	19.8. 1948	V - 105,011

2 Other Spellings or aliases (andere benutzte Schreibweise oder Namen)	6 Citizenship (Staatsbürgerschaft) H I A S
-- - -	derzeit ungeklaert/frueher Polen und Rumaenien/

3 R C, Prot, Jew, Other Religion röm-kath, prot, jud, andersgläubig)	7 Marital status S, M, Sep, D, Wid, Unr (Familienstand led, verh, sep, gesch, verw, unbegleitet)
Jude, getauft r.kath am 11.12.1912.	geschieden

8 Names (Namen)	Relationship to head (Verwandtschaftsgrad zu Familienoberhaupt)	Date of birth (Geburtsdatum)	Citizenship (Staatsbürgersch.)	Town, province and country of birth (Stadt, Provinz und Geburtsland)
1 Man (Mann)			derzeit	
Ba ron GROEDEL Richard		29.8.1890	ungeklaert vormals POLEN und RUMAENIEN J u d e	Maramaros-Sziget /Rumaenien/
2 Woman (Frau)				
3 Children (Kinder)				
4				
5				
6				
7				

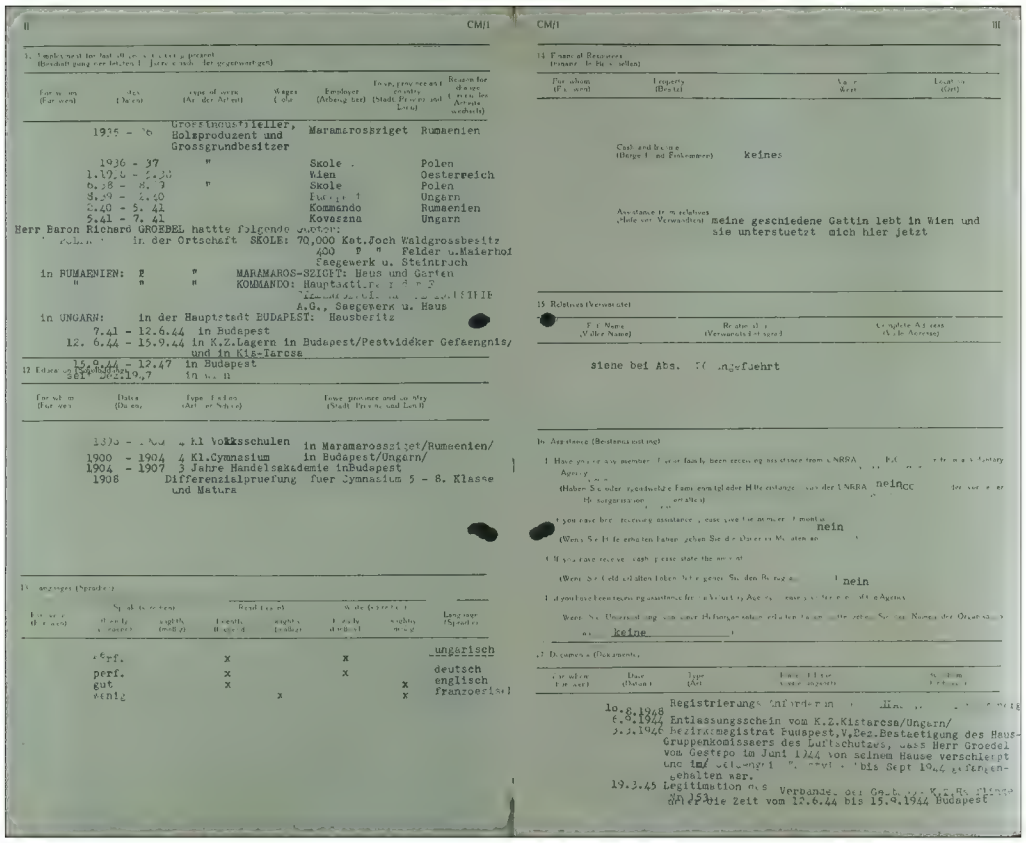
9 Other Members of Family
(Andere Familienmitglieder)

a) Full names (Volle Namen)

b)
c)
d)
e)
f)
g)

10 Places of residence for last 10 years
(Aufenthaltsorte der letzten 10 Jahre)

For whom (Für wen)	Dates (Daten)	Town or village, province and country (Stadt, Gemeinde, Provinz und Land)	
	1936 - 36	Maramaros-Sziget	Rumaenien
	36 - 37	Skole	Polen
	1.38 - 5.38	Wien	Oesterreich
	6.38 - 8.39	Skole	Polen
	8.39 - 2.40	Budapest	Ungarn
	2.40 - 5.41	Lommerdo	Rumaenien
	5.41 - 7.41	Kovaszna	Ungarn
	7.41 - 12.6.44	Budapest	"
	12.6.44- 15.9.44	K.Z.Pestvideki foghaz u	Nistarosa/Ung./
	15.9.44- 12.47	Budapest	Ungarn
seit	12.47 -	Wien	



II CM/1

1. Employment for last 10 years (Beschäftigung der letzten 10 Jahre einschließlich der gegenwärtigen)

For whom (Für wen)	Dates (Daten)	Type of work (Art der Arbeit)	Wages (Lohn)	Employer (Arbeitgeber)	Town, province or state (Stadt, Provinz und Land)	Reason for change (Grund für den Arbeitswechsel)
	1935 - '6	Grossindustrieller, Holzproduzent und Grossgrundbesitzer		Maramarossziget	Rumaenien	
	1936 - 37	"		Skole	Polen	
	1.10.6 - 2.38			Wien	Oesterreich	
	6.38 - M. 9	"		Skole	Polen	
	3.39 - 2.40			Budapest	Ungarn	
	2.40 - 5. 41			Kommando	Rumaenien	
	5.41 - 7. 41			Kovaszna	Ungarn	

Herr Baron Richard GROEBEL hattte folgende Objekte:
[illegible] in der Ortschaft SKOLE: 70,000 Kat.Joch Waldgrossbesitz
400 P " Felder u.Maierhof
Saegewerk u. Steintruch
in RUMAENIEN: " " MARAMAROS-SZIGET: Haus und Garten
" " " KOMMANDO: Hauptsitz [illegible]
[illegible] A.G., Saegewerk u. Haus
in UNGARN: in der Hauptstadt BUDAPEST: Hausbesitz
7.41 - 12.6.44 in Budapest
12. 6.44 - 15.9.44 in K.Z.Lagern in Budapest/Pestvidéker Gefaengnis, und in Kis-Tarcsa
15.9.44 - 12.47 in Budapest
12 Edu[illegible] 2el 2e:19.7 in [illegible] B

For whom (Für wen)	Dates (Daten)	Type of studies (Art der Schule)	Town, province and country (Stadt, Provinz und Land)
	1896 - [illegible]	4 Kl Volksschulen	in Maramarossziget/Rumaenien/
	1900 - 1904	4 Kl.Cymnasium	in Budapest/Ungarn/
	1904 - 1907	3 Jahre Handelsak&demie	inBudapest
	1908	Differenzialpruefung	fuer Cymnazium 5 - 8. Klasse und Matura

13 Languages (Sprache)

For whom (Für wen)	Speak fluently (Sprechen fließend)	Speak brokenly (Sprechen gebrochen)	Read fluently (Lesen fließend)	Read brokenly (Lesen gebrochen)	Write fluently (Schreiben fließend)	Write brokenly (Schreiben gebrochen)	Language (Sprache)
	perf.		x		x		ungarisch
	perf.		x		x		deutsch
	gut		x			x	englisch
	wenig			x		x	franzoesisch

CM/1 III

14 Financial Resources (Finanzielle Mittel)

For whom (Für wem)	Property (Besitz)	Value (Wert)	Location (Ort)

Cash and bonds (Bargeld und Bankkonten) keines

Assistance to relatives (Hilfe für Verwandte) meine geschiedene Gattin lebt in Wien und sie unterstuetzt mich hier jetzt

15 Relatives (Verwandte)

Full Name (Voller Name)	Relationship (Verwandtschaft)	Complete Address (Volle Adresse)

siene bei Abs. [illegible] angefuehrt

16 Assistance (Beistand leistung)

1 Have you ever been a member of any fraternal organization from a NRBA [illegible] Agency [illegible]
(Haben Sie oder irgendwelche Familienmitglieder Hilfe erhalten von der NRBA [illegible] Hilfsorganisation [illegible]) nein

2 Do you need legal assistance, such as [illegible]
(Wenn Sie Hilfe benoetigen [illegible]) nein

3 If you have received cash please state the amount
(Wenn Sie Geld erhalten haben [illegible]) nein

4 Have you been refused assistance from [illegible] Agency
Wenn Sie Unterstuetzung von einer Hilfsorganisation erhalten haben [illegible] Name der Organisation
keine

17 Documents (Dokumente)

For whom (Für wen)	Date (Datum)	Type (Art)	Issued by (Von wem ausgestellt)	Number (Nummer)

10.8.1948 Registrierung [illegible]
6.8.1944 Entlassungsschein vom K.Z.Kistarcsa/Ungarn/
9.3.1946 bezirksregistrat Budapest,V.Bez.Bestaetigung des Haus-Gruppenkommissars des Luftschutzes, dass Herr Groedel vom Gestapo im Juni 1944 von seinem Hause verschleppt und im [illegible] bis Sept 1944 gefangen gehalten war.
19.3.45 Legitimation als Verbands- bei Ge.b. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

IV CM/1

18 Organizations (Organisationen)

For whom (Für wen)	Date (Datum)	Name (Name)	Purpose (Zweck)
		ich war nie Mitglieg in einer politischen Organisation oder Partei	

19 Present Address (Gegenwärtige Anschrift)

Date (Datum)	Street address or name of camp (Name der Straße oder des Lagers)	Town or city (Stadt)	Country (Land)
10.8.1948	WIEN, I.Bez., Babenbergergasse 9 Mez. bei Oberfinanzrat Dr. [illegible]		

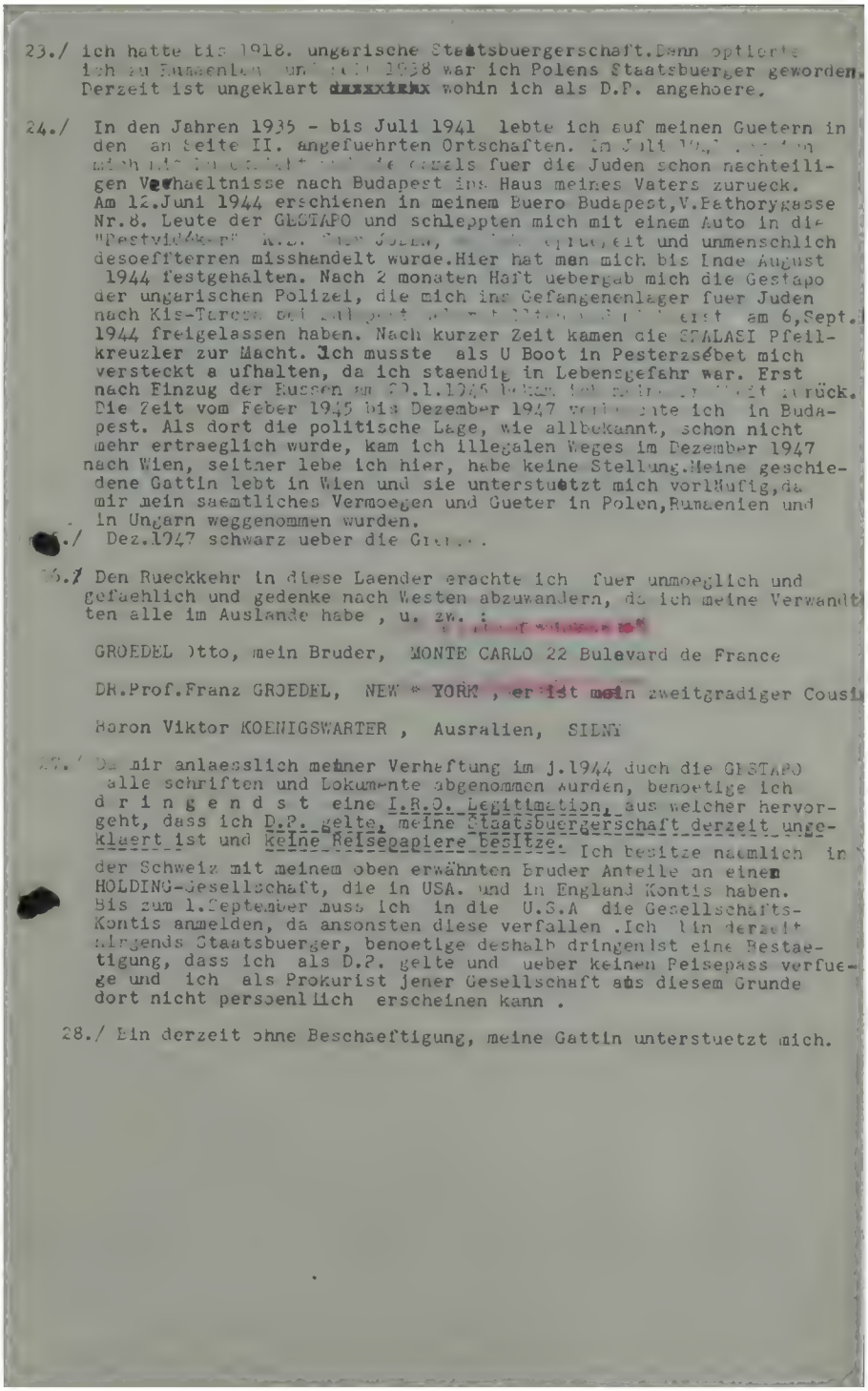
20 Remarks. Use for any additional information
(Bemerkungen. Für zusätzliche Informationen bestimmt)

Eltern Hermann GROEDEL , Budapest,VI.Lendvaygasse 26. JUDE
Melanie geb.WEINER " " JUDIN

Beruf : Holzgrossproduzent
Holzgrossindustrieller

21 Richard Groedel
Signature
(Unterschrift)

WIEN , 10.8.1948
22
Signature of Interviewer
(Unterschrift des Vernehmers)



23./ Ich hatte bis 1918. ungarische Staatsbuergerschaft.Dann optierte ich zu Rumaenien und seit 1938 war ich Polens Staatsbuerger geworden. Derzeit ist ungeklart ~~xxxxxxx~~ wohin ich als D.P. angehoere.

24./ In den Jahren 1935 - bis Juli 1941 lebte ich auf meinen Guetern in den an Seite II. angefuehrten Ortschaften. Im Juli [illegible] mich die [illegible] damals fuer die Juden schon nachteiligen Verhaeltnisse nach Budapest ins Haus meines Vaters zurueck. Am 12.Juni 1944 erschienen in meinem Buero Budapest,V.Bathorygasse Nr.8. Leute der GESTAPO und schleppten mich mit einem Auto in die "Pestvidéker" K.u. [illegible] Juden, [illegible] grausam und unmenschlich desoefteren misshandelt wurde.Hier hat man mich bis Ende August 1944 festgehalten. Nach 2 monaten Haft uebergab mich die Gestapo der ungarischen Polizei, die mich ins Gefangenenlager fuer Juden nach Kis-Tarcsa bei Budapest [illegible] erst am 6,Sept. 1944 freigelassen haben. Nach kurzer Zeit kamen die SZALASI Pfeilkreuzler zur Macht. Ich musste als U Boot in Pesterzsébet mich versteckt a ufhalten, da ich staendig in Lebensgefahr war. Erst nach Einzug der Russen am 29.1.1945 [illegible] zurück. Die Zeit vom Feber 1945 bis Dezember 1947 verbrachte ich in Budapest. Als dort die politische Lage, wie allbekannt, schon nicht mehr ertraeglich wurde, kam ich illegalen Weges im Dezember 1947 nach Wien, seitner lebe ich hier, habe keine Stellung.Meine geschiedene Gattin lebt in Wien und sie unterstuetzt mich vorlaufig,da mir mein saemtliches Vermoegen und Gueter in Polen,Rumaenien und in Ungarn weggenommen wurden.

25./ Dez.1947 schwarz ueber die Gr[illegible].

26./ Den Rueckkehr in diese Laender erachte ich fuer unmoeglich und gefaehlich und gedenke nach Westen abzuwandern, da ich meine Verwandten alle im Auslande habe , u. zw. :

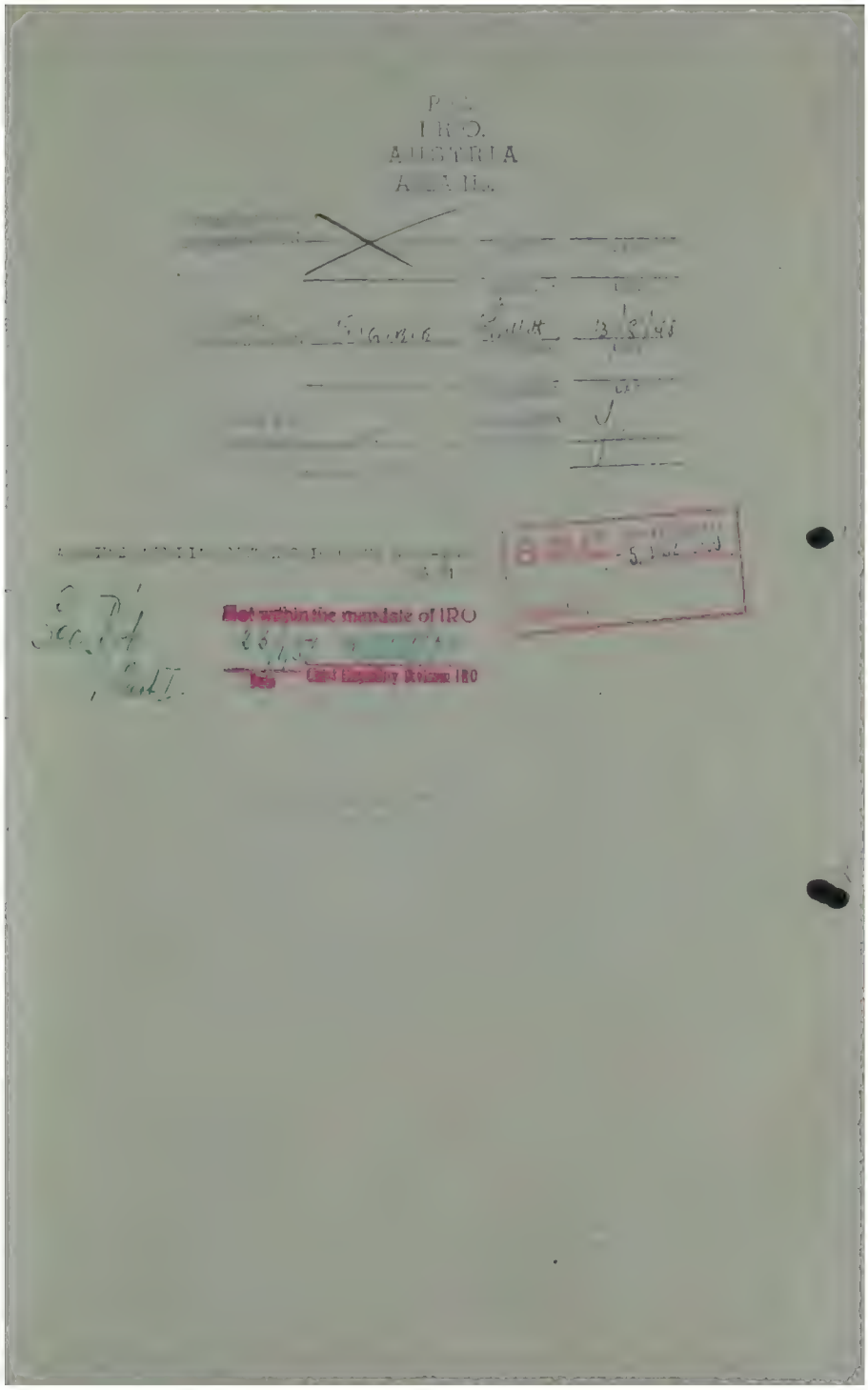
GROEDEL Otto, mein Bruder, MONTE CARLO 22 Bulevard de France

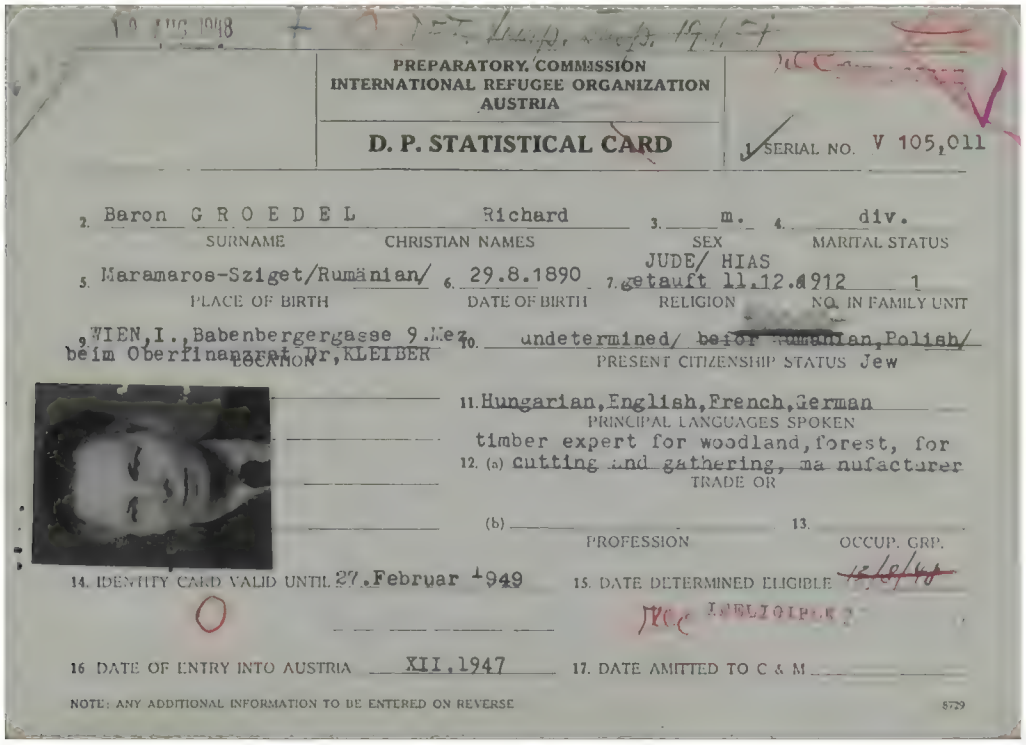
DR.Prof.Franz GROEDEL, NEW * YORK , er ist mein zweitgradiger Cousin

Baron Viktor KOENIGSWARTER , Ausralien, SIDNY

27./ Da mir anlaesslich meiner Verhaftung im j.1944 duch die GESTAPO alle schriften und Dokumente abgenommen wurden, benoetige ich d r i n g e n d s t eine I.R.O. Legitimation, aus welcher hervorgeht, dass ich D.P. gelte, meine Staatsbuergerschaft derzeit ungeklaert ist und keine Reisepapiere besitze. Ich besitze naemlich in der Schweiz mit meinem oben erwähnten Bruder Anteile an einer HOLDING-Gesellschaft, die in USA. und in England Kontis haben. Bis zum 1.September muss ich in die U.S.A die Gesellschafts-Kontis anmelden, da ansonsten diese verfallen .Ich bin derzeit nirgends Staatsbuerger, benoetige deshalb dringenst eine Bestaetigung, dass ich als D.P. gelte und ueber keinen Reisepass verfuege und ich als Prokurist jener Gesellschaft aus diesem Grunde dort nicht persoenlich erscheinen kann .

28./ Bin derzeit ohne Beschaeftigung, meine Gattin unterstuetzt mich.


IRO.
AUSTRIA
Not within the mandate of IRO



PREPARATORY COMMISSION
INTERNATIONAL REFUGEE ORGANIZATION
AUSTRIA

D. P. STATISTICAL CARD

SERIAL NO. V 105,011

2. Baron G R O E D E L (SURNAME) Richard (CHRISTIAN NAMES) 3. m. (SEX) 4. div. (MARITAL STATUS)

5. Maramaros-Sziget/Rumänian/ (PLACE OF BIRTH) 6. 29.8.1890 (DATE OF BIRTH) 7. JUDE/ HIAS getauft 11.12.1912 (RELIGION) 1 (NO. IN FAMILY UNIT)

9. WIEN,I.,Babenbergergasse 9.Hof beim Oberfinanzrat Dr.KLEIBER (LOCATION) 10. undetermined/ ~~befor Rumanian~~,Polish/ Jew (PRESENT CITIZENSHIP STATUS)

11. Hungarian,English,French,German (PRINCIPAL LANGUAGES SPOKEN)

12. (a) timber expert for woodland,forest, for cutting and gathering, ma nufacturer (TRADE OR)

(b) _____ (PROFESSION) 13. _____ (OCCUP. GRP.)

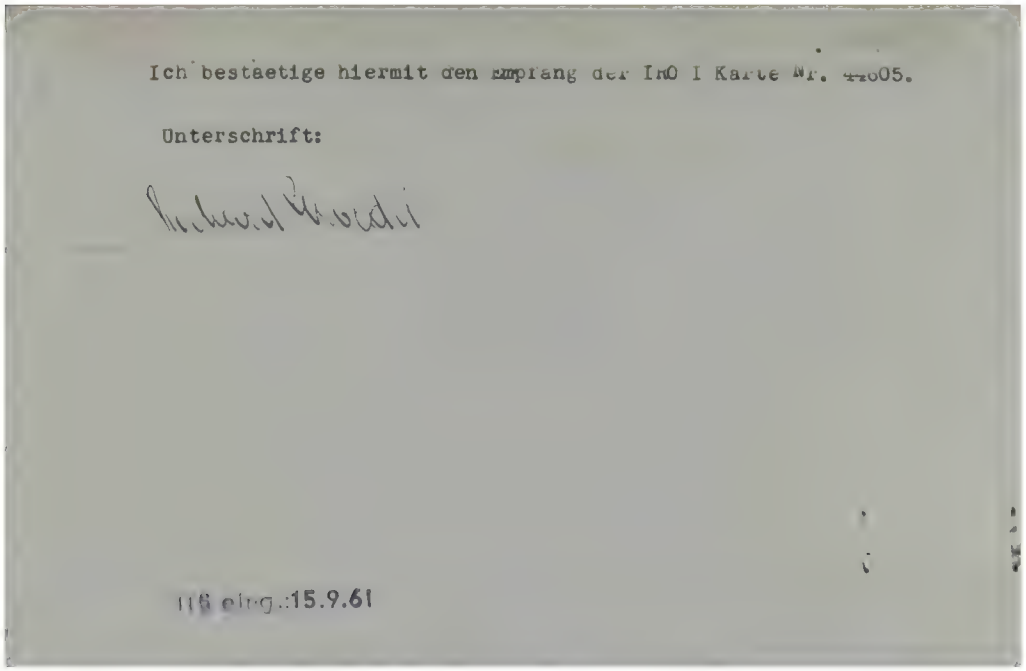
14. IDENTITY CARD VALID UNTIL 27.Februar 1949 15. DATE DETERMINED ELIGIBLE ~~15/6/48~~

O

16. DATE OF ENTRY INTO AUSTRIA XII.1947 17. DATE AMITTED TO C & M _____

NOTE: ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION TO BE ENTERED ON REVERSE

8729



Ich bestaetige hiermit den empfang der IntO I Karte Nr. 42605.

Unterschrift:

Richard Groedel

116 eing.:15.9.61

Elsa Gutfreund Bernfeld (1881– ca. 1942)

Elsa Gutfreund Bernfeld

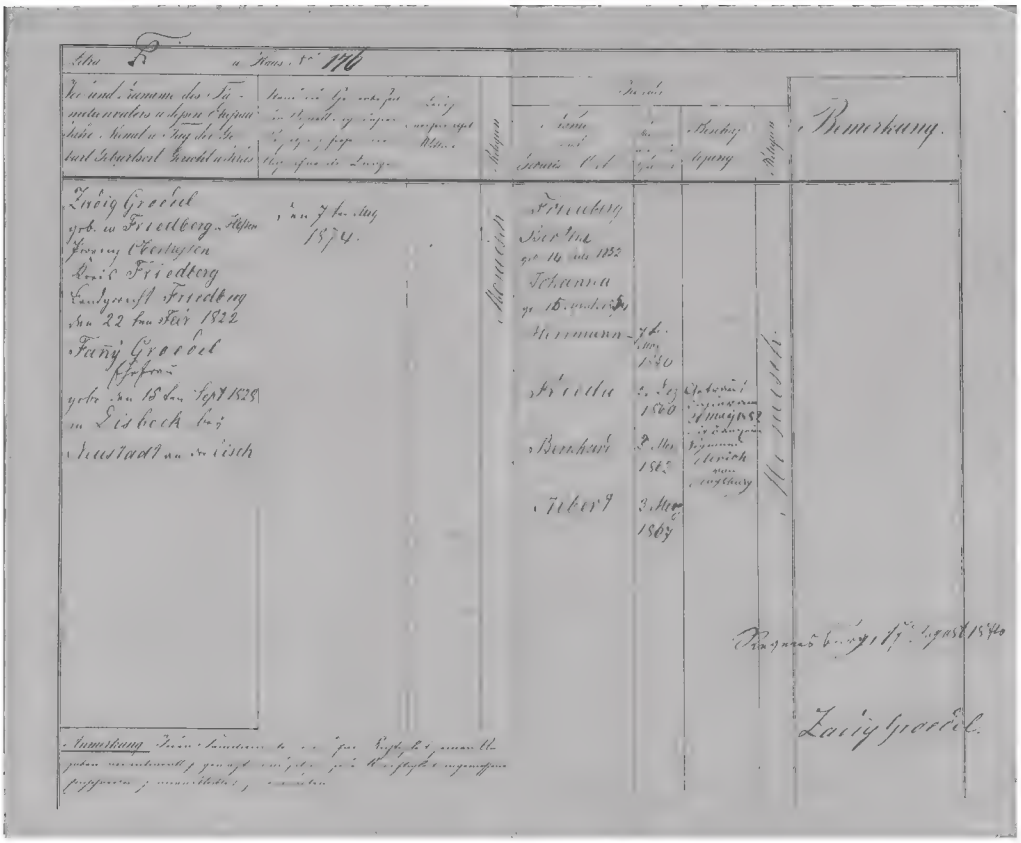
(Niece of Baron Hermann Groedel)

Doctor Elsa Bernfeld was born on 01.12.1881 in Leipzig. She was the daughter of Friedrich and Johanna Gutfreund (Hermann's sister), born Groedel. Elsa was married to the physician and chemist Dr. Isidor Bernfeld.

Bernfeld founded the chemical factory "Dr. Isidor Bernfeld & Co." in Leipzig Plagwitz. The Bernfelds had two children: Werner (1905) and Peter. The family lived at the Lortzingstraße 15.

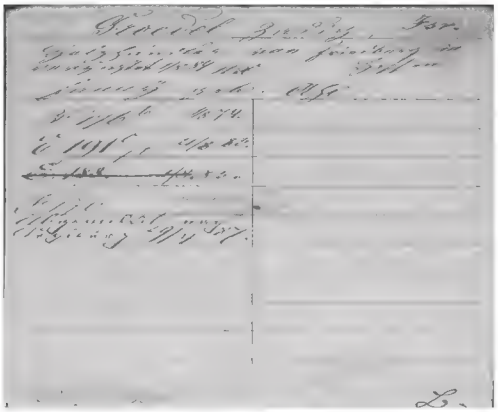
Peter Bernfeld went to Switzerland in 1935 and later to the USA. Isidor Bernfeld died in 1937. The son Werner traveled from the following year to the UK. As a result of the racist "law available via the Mietverhältnisse with Jews" from April 1939 Elsa Bernfeld was forced to move to the Jewish house Nordplatz 7. She was deported on 01.21.1942 to Riga, then murdered in either Auschwitz or Treblinka.

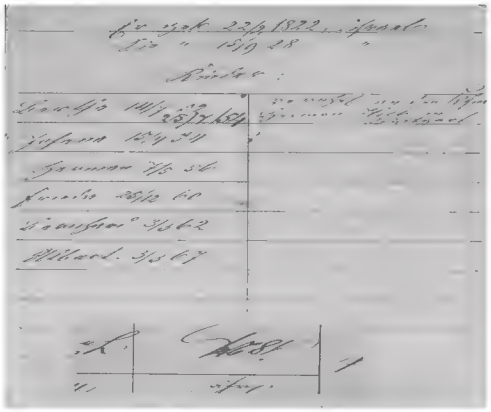
OTHER FAMILY-RELATED DOCUMENTS



Zadig Groedel Family:

Regensburg Census ca. 1887





Friedberg

1856

City Directory

Friedberg

in der Wetterau, Kreistadt in der Grossh. Hess. Provinz Oberhessen, an der Main-Weserbahn mit Fabriken & mancherlei Gewerben; 5,600 Einwohner.

Advocaten: Trapp II., Seyd, Otto (letzterer auch Kammerrath in Solms-Laubach).

Bechstein, Joh. II. (1845),
Leder- & Holzhandlung.

Bechstein, Wilhelm, (1843),
Druck-, Schön- & Schwarzfärberei & Nesseldruckerei.

Blindenanstalt,
(Dr. Schaefer), Seiler- & Korbwaarenfabrik & Strohflechterei.

Damm, Ferdinand (1824),
Colonialwaarenhandlung.

Fertsch, Wilh. (1845),
Colonialwaaren, Commission, Spedition & Incasso.

Fritz, Joh. Philipp (1827),
(Daniel August Fritz),
Colonial- & Porzellanwaaren.

Groedel, David, Söhne,
(Hirsch Groedel), Eisenwaaren.

Groedel, Gebrüder (1810),
(Ludwig & Bermann & David Groedel), Eisen-, Spezereiwaaren, Holz-, Stein- & Gyps-, sowie Fruchthandel im Grossen.

Groedel Family Contract: 15 November 1858

Transfer of business to Mayer S. Nussbaum [FB-1279].
"Today we sell to our brother-in-law M. S. Nussbaum all our goods located in the business premises of H. B. Groedel together with cartons p.p. (etc.) at the price of A. 5,100, say Five Thousand One Hundred Guilders, the payment of which shall be made in the following manner happen:
1) in the dowry of 3,000 fl promised by our mother.

2) in cash surrender of 2,100 fl.

= 5,100 fl.

Both parties hereby certify the receipt / namely the brothers Ludwig and Zadig Grödel the receipt of the amount of the surrendered goods and M. S. Nußbaum of the dowry. Friedberg, November 15, 1858
signed. Ludwig Grödel,

signed. Zadig Grödel, gez. M. S. Nußbaum"

Albert's UK Lawsuit to Recover Ship Remuneration

1927

Case No. 200 *contd.*

nationals on 28 October, 1918, when the Austro-Hungarian Empire ceased to exist by the deposition of the Emperor. (The learned judge herein followed Eve, J., in *Rothschild* v. *Administrator of Austrian Property*, L.R. [1923] 2 Ch. 542, and stated that, but for that decision and the practice of the respective Administrators of Austrian and Hungarian Property founded upon it, he would have been disposed to hold that the expression meant "nationals of Hungary, treating Hungary as though "it were still the former Kingdom of Hungary," a meaning which would have included persons who became Hungarian nationals between 28 October, 1918, and 26 July, 1921.)

(*b*) That the plaintiff, being thus *prima facie* within the scope of the expression "nationals of the former Kingdom of "Hungary" in Article 1 (ix), must (if he was to succeed) establish his exclusion under Article 2 of the Treaty of Peace Order,[1] and under that Article it was necessary for him within six months from the coming into force of the Treaty to show to the satisfaction of the Administrator that he had acquired *ipso facto* in accordance with its provisions the nationality of an Allied or Associated Power. (See *Baron Reitzes de Marienwert* v. *Administrator of Austrian Property*, L.R. [1924] 2 Ch. 282.) This he had failed to do, and there was no suggestion that the Administrator in arriving at his conclusion had acted in bad faith. Accordingly the plaintiff's property must remain subject to the charge. [Report: 44 T.L.R., p. 65.]

Case No. 201

Nationality—Change of Nationality in Cases of Territorial Changes—Option—Beginning of the Period of.

OEDENBURG (CHANGE OF NATIONALITY) CASE.

Austrian Administrative Court. 2 September, 1927.
A. 317/26.

THE FACTS.—The appellant was resident in Oedenburg (Burgenland). He asked the Austrian Minister of the Interior for a declaration that he was an Austrian subject on the ground that Oedenburg had been assigned to the Austrian Republic by the Treaty of St. Germain. This application was refused on the ground that the town of Oedenburg had remained with Hungary as the result of the plebiscite which had taken place in pursuance of the Protocol of Venice of 13 October, 1921.

[1] Article 2 of the Order in Council corresponds with Article 232, 1 (*b*), sub-paragraph 3, of the Treaty of Trianon.

Held: That the appeal must be rejected. The acquisition of new nationality was conditioned by the actual exercise of sovereignty by Austria. In accordance with the opinions generally held on the subject and the unanimous practice of States it is, except when treaties provide otherwise, the change of territorial sovereignty which brings about the change of nationality in ceded territory. That change is brought about not as the result of the treaty of cession alone, but only as the result of the treaty of cession in conjunction with the actual taking possession of the territory. This is the reason why the periods for option laid down in the Treaties of Versailles and St. Germain begin only with the moment of the definitive transfer of sovereignty. In the case of plebiscitary territories this date coincides with the attribution of territory as the result of the plebiscite. (See Articles 91, 112, 113 of the Treaty of Versailles and Article 79 of the Treaty of St. Germain.) The view that as the result of cession a State loses its citizens at a time other than at the time of the actual transference of sovereignty would lead to impossible results. Thus, for instance, it would have to treat them for a time as aliens, and it could actually deport them before the transfer of territory has taken place. Oedenburg had never been ceded to Austria. Hungary, whose existence as an independent State had not been affected either as the result of the revolution or of the Peace Treaties, has continued to exercise sovereignty over this territory. Accordingly, Austria is bound by virtue of Article 17 of the Treaty of St. Germain to regard the residents of Oedenburg as Hungarian subjects. [Report: *Sammlung der Erkenntnisse des Verwaltungsgerichtshofes*, vol. LI (1927), administrative part, *Österreichische Staatsdruckerei*, No. 14,649 (A), pp. 134 ff.]

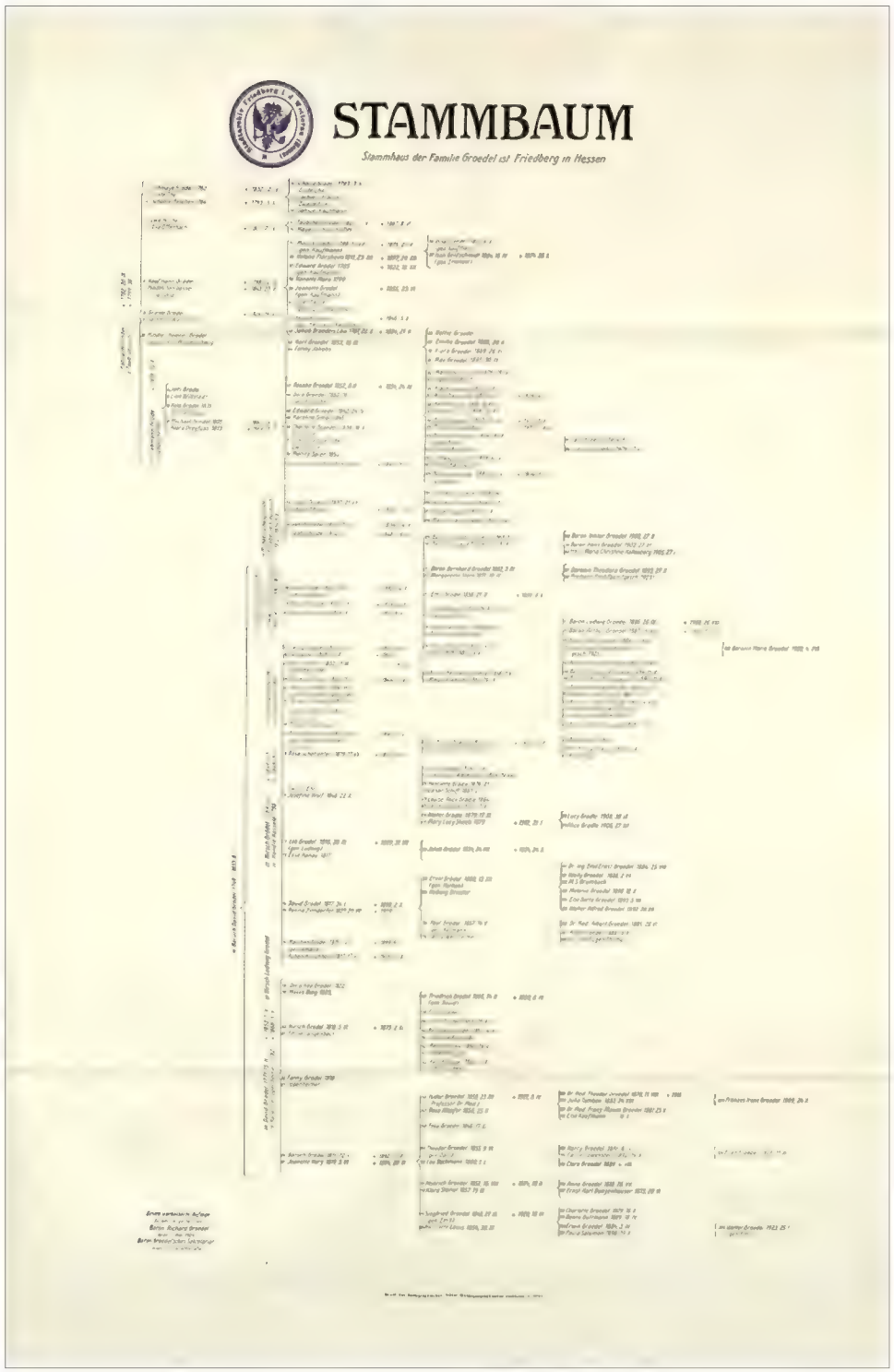
Case No. 202

Nationality—How far Affected by Peace Treaties—Change of Nationality before the Entrance into Force of the Treaty—Sequestration in War Time—Enemy Nationality of Owner at Time of Sequestration—Meaning and Extent of Article 297 (*b*) and (*d*) of the Treaty of Versailles.

CHANGE OF NATIONALITY (GREEK SEQUESTRATION) CASE.

Areopagus. 1928. No. 170.

THE FACTS.—A German national, F., the owner of immovable property in Greece, assumed Greek nationality on March 26, 1920, four days before the provisions of the Treaty of Versailles affecting Greece came into



Groedel Family Tree, by Richard Groedel

1924

Iren's Birth Certificate

ROMANIA

Comuna Izvoret Județul Maramureș

EXTRAS DIN REGISTRUL STĂRII CIVILE PENTRU NĂSCUTI PE ANUL 1897 / Romănie

Nr. curent	DATA (ziua, luna și ora nașterii)	ANUL (anul, ziua și ora nașterii)	PRENUMELE, SEXUL ȘI CONFESIUNEA NOULUI NĂSCUT	PRENUMELE, NUMELE, PROFESIUNEA ȘI DOMICILIUL PĂRINȚILOR	VÂRSTA	LOCUL NAȘTERII (când e deosebit de locuința părinților)	ARĂTAREA ACTULUI de recunoaștere a nașterii sau a numelui, profesiunei și domiciliului martorilor	EVENTUALE ÎNDREPTĂRI SAU OBSERVAȚIUNI. SEMNĂTURI
418	7 Aug 1897	4 Aug 1897	Irena fată ilr.	Szulofalvi Szilágy Soodel Bernad proprietar de pământ Németi Szalánia Izvoret	41 / 37	/	/	Szulofalvi Szilágy Soodel Bernad proprietar de pământ Preuncheiere luată în ofițerie

MENTIUNI ULTERIOARE

Se certifică exactitatea prezentului extract.

Dat astăzi. Izvoret 1/14 Decembrie 1897

OFIȚER AL STĂRII CIVILE,

(L. S.)

NOTAR,

ROMANIA 2 LEI TIMBRU FISCAL

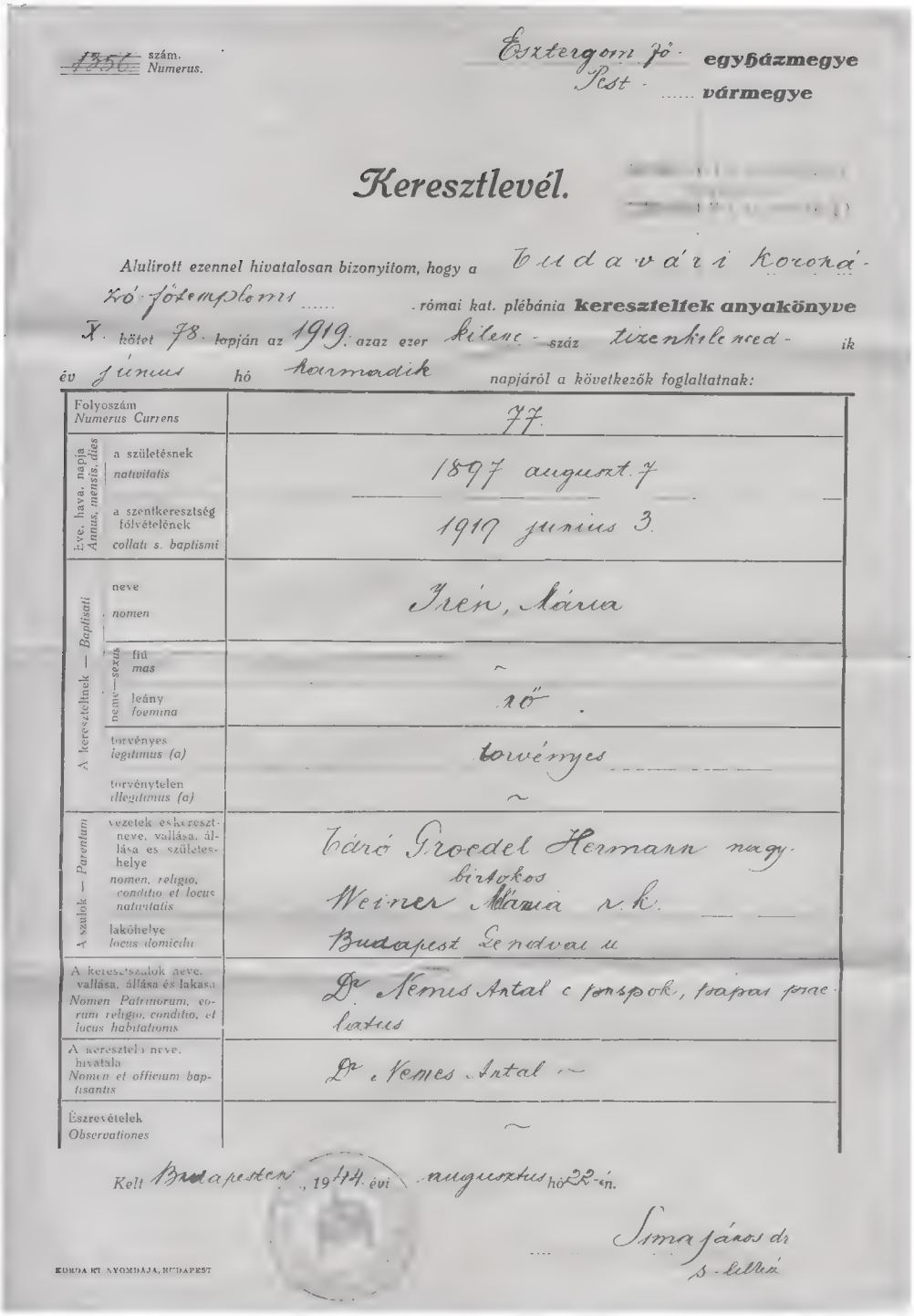
ROMANIA 2 LEI TIMBRU FISCAL

ROMANIA 2 LEI TIMBRU FISCAL

ROMANIA 1 LEU TIMBRU FISCAL

ROMANIA

Formular Nr. 25 (Art. 42 din regl.).



~~1356~~ szám. *Numerus.*

Esztergom fő- egyházmegye
Pest ..... vármegye

Keresztlevél.

Alulirott ezennel hivatalosan bizonyitom, hogy a budavári koronázó főtemplomi ..... *római kat. plébánia* **keresztelési anyakönyve** X. *kötet* 78. *lapján az* 1919. *azaz ezer* kilenc *száz* tizenkilencedik *év* június *hó* harmadik *napjáról a következők foglaltatnak:*

Folyoszám *Numerus Currens*		77.
Éve, hava, napja *Annus, mensis, dies*	a születésnek *nativitatis*	1897 augusztus 7
	a szentkeresztség fölvételének *collati s. baptismi*	1919 június 3.
A keresztelteknek — *Baptisati*	neve *nomen*	Iren, Mária
neme — *sexus*	fiú *mas*	~
	leány *foemina*	igen
	törvényes *legitimus (a)*	törvényes
	törvénytelen *illegitimus (a)*	~
A szülők — *Parentum*	vezetek és kereszt-neve, vallása, állása és születés-helye *nomen, religio, conditio et locus nativitatis*	Báró Grocdel Hermann nagybirtokos Weiner Mária r. k.
	lakóhelye *locus domicilii*	Budapest Lendvai u
A keresztszülők neve, vallása, állása és lakása *Nomen Patrinorum, eorum religio, conditio, et locus habitationis*		Dr Nemes Antal c. prépost, tanár, plébános
A keresztelő neve, hivatala *Nomen et officium baptisantis*		Dr. Nemes Antal ~
Észrevételek *Observationes*		~

Kelt Budapesten, 1919. évi augusztus hó 22-én.

Sima János dr
s. lelkész

KORDA KI. NYOMDAJA, BUDAPEST

Iren's Baptismal Certificate

1919

1842 Business Directory

Grand Addressbook

of the

Merchants, Manufacturers and trade professionals from

Europe and the main places of foreign parts of the world.

No. 3.

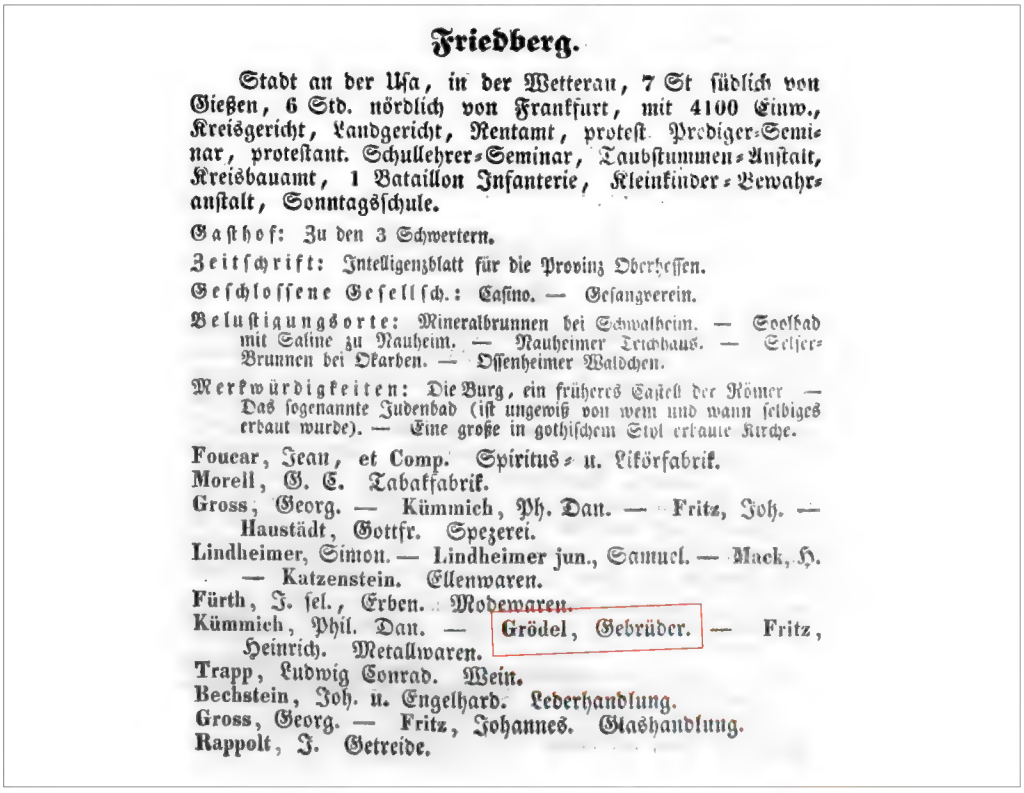
Free City of Frankfurt,

Grand Duchy of Hesse,

Electorate of Hesse and Dutchy of Nassau

At the same time, trade geography, products and makes = reference information

Nurnberg 1842



Friedberg.

Stadt an der Usa, in der Wetterau, 7 St südlich von Gießen, 6 Std. nördlich von Frankfurt, mit 4100 Einw., Kreisgericht, Landgericht, Rentamt, protest. Prediger-Seminar, protestant. Schullehrer-Seminar, Taubstummen-Anstalt, Kreisbauamt, 1 Bataillon Infanterie, Kleinkinder-Bewahranstalt, Sonntagsschule.

Gasthof: Zu den 3 Schwertern.

Zeitschrift: Intelligenzblatt für die Provinz Oberhessen.

Geschlossene Gesellsch.: Casino. — Gesangverein.

Belustigungsorte: Mineralbrunnen bei Schwalheim. — Soolbad mit Saline zu Nauheim. — Nauheimer Treibhaus. — Selzer-Brunnen bei Okarben. — Ossenheimer Waldchen.

Merkwürdigkeiten: Die Burg, ein früheres Castell der Römer. — Das sogenannte Judenbad (ist ungewiß von wem und wann selbiges erbaut wurde). — Eine große in gothischem Styl erbaute Kirche.

Foucar, Jean, et Comp. Spiritus- u. Likörfabrik.
Morell, G. C. Tabakfabrik.
Gross, Georg. — Kümmich, Ph. Dan. — Fritz, Joh. — Haustädt, Gottfr. Spezerei.
Lindheimer, Simon. — Lindheimer jun., Samuel. — Mack, H. — Katzenstein. Ellenwaren.
Fürth, J. sel., Erben. Modewaren.
Kümmich, Phil. Dan. — Grödel, Gebrüder. — Fritz, Heinrich. Metallwaren.
Trapp, Ludwig Conrad. Wein.
Bechstein, Joh. u. Engelhard. Lederhandlung.
Gross, Georg. — Fritz, Johannes. Glashandlung.
Rappolt, J. Getreide.

Misc Newspaper Articles

Budapesti Hirlap - April 29, 1899

Our correspondent at Kovász telegraphs that the Kommando sawmill of the Gyulafalvi sawmill of the Transylvanian forest industry joint-stock company, which is owned by the Grödel brothers, was completely burned down. The engine house was also destroyed, together with several residential buildings and outbuildings. This was the largest steam sawmill in Hungary.

Budapesti Hirlap, February 26, 1900

(New citizens.) This morning, four people took the oath of Hungarian citizenship in front of Mayor Ján Halmos: ..., Albert Grödel large landowner and industrialist ...

1887 Court Case, Lemberg Nr. 7864

(translated from German)

1. the workers employed in forest manipulations, including timber transportation, are not subject to accident insurance. - 2) However, workers employed in the vineyards of the main industrial enterprise are subject to accident insurance at the same time as the main enterprise.

Decision of April 25, 1894, Z, 1612

Workers' Accident Insurance Institution for Galicia and Bukovina in Lemberg and the company Gebrüder Groedel (Adv. Dr. Haimberger) ca. Min. of the Interior (S. R. Eil. v. Swoboda); E. of December 23, 1892, Z. 10357 Subsequent payment of insurance contributions for the operations of the company Gebruder Groedel.

"The appeals are dismissed as unfounded."

Reasons for the decision. Two appeals were lodged against the Minister's decision. - The Workers' Insurance Institution for Galicia and Bukovina challenges that part of the decision by which it was decided that the insurance contribution is not to be paid in respect of the wages paid to the workers employed in the actual forest manipulation and in the forestry hauling of the wood.

On the other hand, the company Gebrüder Groedel challenges that part of the decision by which it was decided that the obligation to pay contributions applies not only to the workers of the actual factory operations, but also to those workers who, for the purposes of the industrial operation, are engaged in feeding the wood to the same, in sorting and piling up the processed material, in manipulating in the warehouse, and in particular in transporting and loading the finished material onto the railroad.

The V. G. Court was not able to recognize either of the two complaints as founded in the law. Already in the min. appeal the Groedel company has been granted the right of appeal by the decision of the t. t. Landesgericht Lemberg of January 29, 1887, Z. 2770, that the landed property of the manor of Skole, to which the forests in question here belong, does not belong to the company "Gebrüder Groedel" registered with the

commercial court, but to Zadig Groedel, Wilhelm Adam Schmidt and Hermann Groedel, each with one third; It is therefore proven that the ownership of the forests and the commercial enterprise of the steam saw are separate, from which it immediately follows that the forest manipulations, which the complainants are entitled to carry out and must carry out in the undisputedly very extensive forest estates covering 6 square miles, are not carried out by them for the purpose of operating the saws, but in the exercise of forestry management.

The complainant insurance institution itself does not claim that this forestry is only a "vineyard" for the board saws; however, it believes that it is allowed to take those amounts from the wages paid for the entire forestry transport of the wood as the basis for calculating the accident insurance, which concerned the part of the forestry work undertaken for the purpose of the main industrial operations subject to insurance. - However, it must first be remembered that in this case the insurance company's complaint does not correspond to the payment orders issued and sent to the Groedel company, according to which the wages of the civil servants and workers employed in the forest manipulation were included in the insurance calculation without any restriction.

Apart from that, however, it had to be taken into account that the concept of forestry not only includes the actual forest manipulations, but also the forestry bringing, that is that activity which refers to the procurement of wood from the forest for personal use and in general for others than industrial purposes.

These essential components of the forestry business were therefore, with regard to the fact that forestry as such does not belong to the businesses subject to accident insurance (§ 1 of the Act of December 28, 1887, R. G. B. No. 1 ex 1888), from the accident insurance in question kept free, as was done with the contested decision.

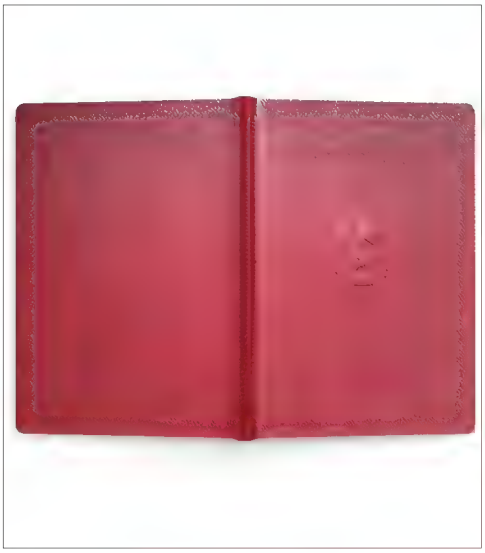
Regarding the complaint of the Groedel company, the following should be remembered. The complainants' steam sawing companies are industrial companies which are undisputedly covered by accident insurance pursuant to § 1 of cit. vessel subject. On the other hand, if the actual forest manipulations, the felling of wood and forestry bringing must be regarded as components of forestry, insofar as the raw material obtained is used in one's own economy or is sold on without being subjected to further processing, all work which is related to commercial processing of the raw material into a marketable product are

regarded as industrial activities. Accordingly, all work aimed at supplying the necessary material to the industrial enterprises of the manufacture of resonance wood and wooden wire, sorting it, finishing the processed material and further processing the wood processed in the factories, cannot possibly be part of forestry be considered, as the complainants claim to demonstrate.

Neither the fact that this work is carried out in places which are removed from the board saws, nor the fact that the workers employed are not exposed to the dangers associated with the actual machine operation, nor finally the fact that these workers are independent, somewhat alters the fact that the work mentioned is merely serve the industrial purposes of the board saws, therefore present themselves as ancillary systems of the main industrial company subject to compulsory insurance and with the main operations of the Alinea 1 and 3 of point 2 of § 1 of the accident insurance company. are subject to the compulsory accident insurance.

The V.G. Hof therefore did not find the explanations of the complaint of the accident insurance institution "in formali" referring to this part of the decision to be correct, because there is no doubt as to which workers were recognized as subject to compulsory insurance according to the content of the contested decision, on the other hand to numerical calculation of the insurance amounts in view of the fundamental change in the lower-instance decisions, the necessary bases must first be procured in accordance with the fundamentals expressed in the contested decision.

Irén Groedel's Passport



Wallenberg Papers

ОБ'ЕДИНЕНИЕ
ДЕПОРТИРОВАННЫХ ВЕНГРОВ

Сим удостоверяется, что пред'-явитель этого документа венгерскими и немецкими фашистами в ..... году в город .....

.....

был депортирован для принудительных работ.

Является членом наше организации.

Секретарь ..... Председатель

Magyarországról Deportáltak
Országos Szövetsége
ОБ'ЕДИНЕНИЕ
ДЕПОРТИРОВАННЫХ ВЕНГРОВ

Igazolvány
УДОСТОВЕРЕНИЕ

..... név

..... lakhely

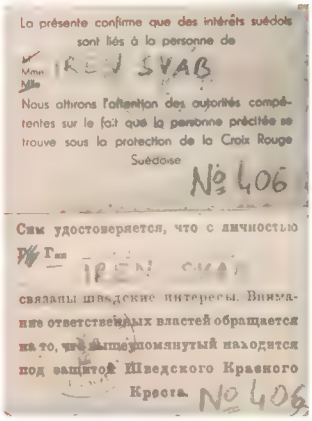
3468. szám

Magyarországról Deportáltak
Országos Szövetsége

Igazoljuk, hogy a jelen igazolvány tulajdonosa a német és magyar fasiszták által 1944 évben ..... munkaszolgálatra kényszermunkára deportáltatott. Nevezett mozgalmunknak..... tagja.

sajátkezű aláírás

főtitkár elnök

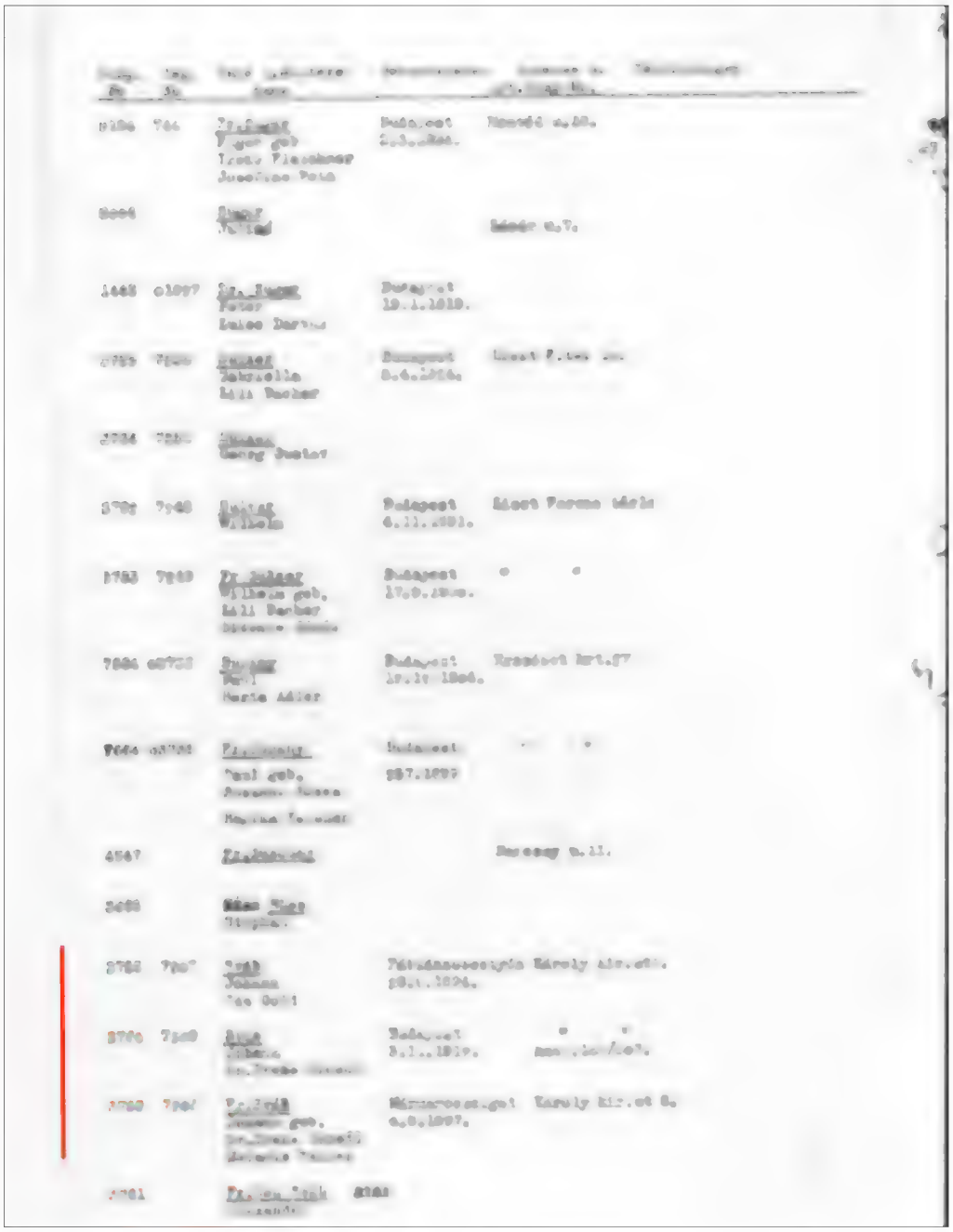


La présente confirme que des intérêts suédois sont liés à la personne de
Mme
Mlle IRÉN SVAB
Nous attirons l'attention des autorités compétentes sur le fait que la personne précitée se trouve sous la protection de la Croix Rouge Suédoise
№ 406

Сим удостоверяется, что с личностью
г-жа IRÉN SVAB
связаны шведские интересы. Внимание ответственных властей обращается на то, что вышеупомянутый находится под защитой Шведского Красного Креста.
№ 406

Wallenberg List: Johann Sváb and family

Sváb: Johann, Ida Gold (Johann's mother); Sváb: Johann, br. Irene Groedl; (br.=baroness) Fr. Sváb: Johann geb. Irene Groedl, Melanie Weiner" (Fr.=Frau, geb.=born)



MAGYAR MERCUR

HITELES SORSOLÁSI TUDÓSITÓ.

Elofizetesi ar: EGESZ EVRE 2 frt. Kiadó és tulajdonos LORY Jeno.

BUDAPEST. Hatvani uteza 17 sz BUDAPEST

XIII. evfolyam. Elofizetési felhivás! XIII. évfolyam.

MAGYAR MERCUR

szerkesztősége és kiad hi atala.

Jeno Lőry: Magyar Mercur Description

January 6, 1890

Clipping 23.

Mayyar Merkur advertisement describing its function

*If someone has followed the gradual and purposeful progress our publication has made over the past twelve years, they cannot deny us the recognition we deserve—recognition earned through tireless effort, honest work, clear intentions, and selfless dedication. This acknowledgment has also been expressed through official endorsements by the esteemed Hungarian Royal Minister of the Interior in his decree of December 11, 1888 (No. 80753/III.b.), and the Hungarian Royal Ministry of Religion and Public Education in its decree of 1889 (No. 244). However, public recognition preceded these ministerial endorsements, as *Magyar Mercur* is widely regarded as the most reliable and authoritative lottery bulletin in Hungary, far surpassing any similar publication.*

*Over the past year, our publication has undergone significant growth. Its format has expanded, its layout has been reorganized, and, most importantly, it has been printed on a rotary press—just like the largest daily newspapers. This improvement offers immense benefits to our subscribers, as it allows us to publish our lottery results just a few hours after the drawings and distribute them nationwide. As a result, *Magyar Mercur* consistently reaches readers one to two days earlier than any other lottery bulletin in the country.*

Looking to the future, we remain committed to continuing on this path, striving to offer more and better content to our readers. As always, we will give special attention to lottery results. We have implemented a thorough revision system to eliminate errors, ensuring that any rare mistake is promptly corrected in the following issue. Additionally, we regularly include lists of outstanding bonds—those drawn in earlier lotteries but not yet claimed—to protect our readers from missing out on their winnings.

For subscribers uncertain about the status of their tickets or bonds, we offer free assistance. A simple inquiry by postcard will provide clarification, and our editorial office gladly revises tickets and bonds without charge. We will also continue to refine the structure of our publication, improving its content and style.

Our team of contributors, which last year included esteemed names such as Lukács Enyedi, Adolf Fenyvessy, and Soma Mudrony, will be joined by additional experts in the coming year. These new contributors have already committed to submitting their work more frequently.

As before, financial, economic, transportation, and insurance topics will be carefully covered in dedicated sections. We take special care to present issues clearly, con-

cisely, and in a manner easily understood by all readers, using proper Hungarian. Academic-style discussions are avoided; instead, we focus on practical, actionable content. We also emphasize the importance of Hungarian content. Over the years, our relentless work has helped push out many German, particularly Austrian, lottery publications from the Hungarian market. However, foreign German lottery bulletins still circulate widely in our country, often undermining trust in Hungarian securities and contributing to the unfortunate trend of our government bonds being predominantly owned abroad, a significant economic disadvantage for Hungary.

Our editorial messages will continue to provide useful guidance on financial and business matters, addressing reader inquiries promptly and free of charge. Special attention will also be given to rural financial institutions, which form a substantial part of the national wealth.

Despite the significant growth of our publication, our subscription fee remains affordable at just 2 forints per year, including postal delivery.

Sample Magyar Mercur

Zalai Közlöny: December 8, 1888

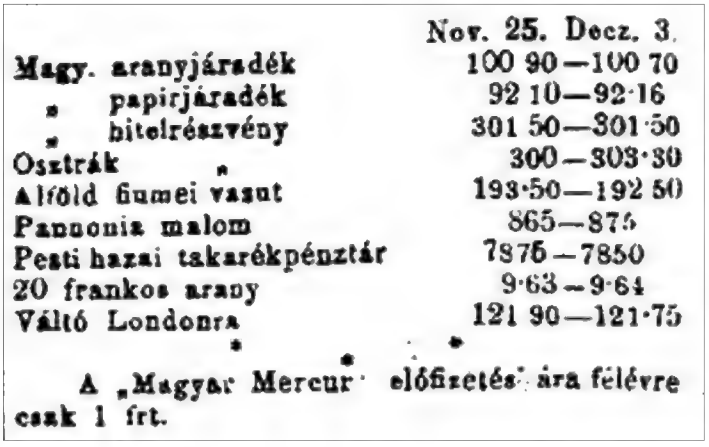
The Baudin holiday on December 2 passed peacefully in Paris, without any disturbances; therefore, the concerns of the financial world regarding this matter were not entirely justified. The end of the month (Ultimo) also passed without any insurmountable difficulties arising in Berlin. Nevertheless, the stock market has not improved, as two dangerous obstacles must still be avoided.

On December 10, the signing of the new Russian loan will take place, and if, as some believe, it does not succeed, the stock market will close the year in turmoil. Moreover, France is facing a serious crisis on another front. The Panama Company's crisis is the second obstacle, and its fate will be decided on December 12.

As a result of these developments, trading remains cautious for now. Business is stagnant, and exchange rates are barely moving.

Annuities and investment securities remain relatively stable, and if the political and financial situation were to clear up even slightly, a greater momentum could arise. However, for now, this seems unlikely.

In banking securities, a general tendency toward holding back is observed, with some signs of selling pressure also becoming more apparent.



	Nov. 25.	Decz. 3.
Magy. aranyjáradék	100 90 —	100 70
„ papirjáradék	92 10 —	92·16
„ hitelrészvény	301 50 —	301·50
Osztrák „	300 —	303·30
Alföld fiumei vasut	193·50 —	192 50
Pannonia malom	865 —	875
Pesti hazai takarékpénztár	7875 —	7850
20 frankos arany	9·63 —	9·64
Váltó Londonra	121 90 —	121·75

A „Magyar Mercur" előfizetési ára félévre csak 1 frt.

Transportation company stocks are stable, particularly the Hungarian guaranteed railway bonds, which are in demand.

Industrial company shares show quiet activity overall, though shares in milling companies have regained some stability.

Lottery bonds remain almost unchanged.

Foreign currencies have become more expensive, while precious metals have slightly decreased in price.

The following small table reflects the current performance of the most notable securities.

From the Budapest Stock Exchange

(A weekly report by Magyar Mercur – December 1888)

The peaceful tone of German Emperor Wilhelm II's speech had a generally reassuring effect on the stock exchanges. However, this effect was not fully realized, as the international financial markets remain burdened by significant tensions that overshadow other influences.

The German Emperor emphasized strongly that there is no immediate danger of war. Yet, the unstable domestic situation in France has also contributed to the lack of significant improvement in the overall financial climate.

In recent days, shipments of gold have begun to arrive in Europe from New York, raising hopes for an improvement in the financial markets. If this happens, it is expected to stimulate lively business activity, especially given the major financial operations currently on the horizon.

Annuities and investment securities have held their value relatively well, with the two Hungarian annuities even seeing slight improvements.

Bank shares showed modest gains following the Emperor's speech, and they continue to maintain these improvements, albeit weakly.

Among transportation companies, Hungarian guaranteed railway bonds have been steadily rising in value.

Industrial company shares experienced very light trading, with weak trends overall.

Lottery bonds have remained relatively stable.

Foreign currencies and precious metals have become somewhat cheaper.

MISCELLANEOUS DOCUMENTS & IMPORTANT MENTIONS

- Bandholtz Diary – by General Harry Bandholtz
- Lancashire and Whitehall – by Sir Raymond Street
- Twilight of Money Kings – the influence of the Groedel Group on Austria's finances

Bandholtz Diary

By Major General Harry Hill Bandholtz

Published 1933

Major General Harry Hill Bandholtz was America's representative to the Inter-Allied Supreme Command's Military Mission in Hungary at the end of World War I. Hungary placed a statue of General Bandholtz in front of the American embassy in Budapest; it was removed during the years following WWII and replaced after the fall of Communism. This is an excerpt of his diary during his six-month assignment to Budapest.

AN UNDIPLOMATIC DIARY
BY THE AMERICAN MEMBER OF
THE INTER-ALLIED MILITARY MISSION TO HUNGARY · 1919-1920
MAJ. GEN. HARRY HILL BANDHOLTZ, U. S. A.

October 26, 1919. Our return journey was a trifle more successful than our outward-bound trip, owing to the fact that the Serbian locomotive carried us all the way through Szeged, where a Hungarian locomotive met us and brought us the rest of the way to Budapest, where we arrived about one o'clock, just in time for lunch; and, although Budapest is not particularly cheerful under the circumstances, yet it appeared very much like home after our absence in Belgrade.

This evening Colonel Loree, Captain Gore and I were entertained by the Roumanian General, Serbescu, at a most sumptuous banquet in his billet in the palace of the **Baron [Bernhard] Groedel**. The food was well prepared and everything would have been delicious but for the fact that I had Diamandi on my left front and directly opposite to me General Serbescu, who did several marvelous sword-swallowing feats with his knife. On my left was little Mrs. Serbescu, who had a pair of diamond earrings as big as she was; and on my right was a very homely lady who flashed a diamond about the size of a locomotive headlight, on her forefinger. Colonel Loree was sure that the Roumanians would try to poison us, but by carefully watching what they ate themselves, and imitating them, we escaped serious consequences.

October 30, 1919.

Later in the afternoon, Captain Gore and I took tea with the family of Baron Groedel. They turned over to me a stamp collection which they wish delivered some time to their home in Vienna.

November 23, 1919. Last night Colonel Sheldon, Captain Gore and I were guests at dinner at the house of Baron von Groedel, and while there we met young Baron Weiss, whose family is the wealthiest in Hungary, and whom the Roumanians robbed of eight hundred million kronen worth of property.[133]

[133] *800 million kronen = about $300 million USD in 2025.*

Lancashire and Whitehall

By Sir Raymond Streat

Sunday. May 28th 1933 Vienna

Streat was secretary of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce from 1920 to 1940, a body which very active in lobbying for the interests of cotton manufacturers and merchants. He was heavily involved in campaigns against cheap foreign imports of cotton into imperial markets. Streat was also active in supporting the rationalisation of the cotton industry during the Depression, and helped establish the Lancashire Industrial Development Council in 1931.

The most significant part of Streat's papers are his typescript diaries which run from 1931 to 1958. These provide a detailed record of his work for the Manchester Chamber of Commerce and the Cotton Board. The diaries give a remarkable insight into the relationships between government and industrialists, and the internal politics of the cotton industry as it entered a period of disruption and eventual decline. An edited version of the diaries has been published, *Lancashire and Whitehall: the Diary of Sir Raymond Streat*, edited by Marguerite Dupree (Manchester University Press, 1987), which contains most, if not all, of the contents of these diaries.[134]

We spent three or four hours today with **Baron Albert Groedel**. [note: Albert jr.]

As far as I could without being excessively rude, I tried to find out exactly what he was. Fourth son of a former Baron of the old Austrian Empire (all the sons of Barons became Barons and not merely the eldest), he and his brothers fought in the War as officers in the Austrian Army and two were killed[135]. The principal family estate and birthplace of the Baron was in Transylvania - a territory which the Treaty of Versailles transferred to Rumania, thus involving for Groedel as for the other inhabitants a compulsory change of nationality. That is an event in a man's life the effect of which on his mental processes it is difficult to assess. The Baron and his brothers engage in the business of selling the tim-

[134] *https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/rylands/special-collections/a-to-z/detail/?mms_id=992983876721301631*

[135] *This statement is incorrect. Only Arthur died on the battlefield. First-born Lajos, died of a brain disease.*

ber from their family estates (or what remains of them, more than half having been taken over by one or the other of the socialistic governments in the new countries of Central Europe in which the estates lay). The low price of timber makes it scarcely worth cutting in Central Europe, from whence transport costs are of course very heavy.

When T.D.B. [T.D.Barlow] said that Sarajevo was not the cause, but only the starting point of the Great War, the Baron replied that the cause, in his opinion, was the growth of general education amongst the lower classes in those parts of Austria composed of non-Austrian peoples. Education enabled them to take an interest in history and they soon became ardent nationalists of the nation of which they found themselves to be members. The old Austrian Empire and a general system of education were really mutually exclusive things - one was bound to kill the other.

In any case, the Baron declared, many far-seeing Austrians and not least the Old Emperor himself, knew the Empire could not last under modern conditions. The War was the political method of effecting an inevitable change. but the economic side of the problem of a change of status had never yet been seriously faced and until it was tackled who could expect anything else but confusion?

The Baron's ideas included a universal statutory limitation of the rate of interest on all loans.

He said everything in Central Europe was on paper. Persons and companies made balance sheets but both their assets and their liabilities were entirely unreal - they themselves would neither pay nor be paid in full.

The Baron told us that a law had been passed prohibiting the wearing of badges, rosettes, etc. on the streets. The object was to prevent or discourage the formation of parties - such as Nazis or Communists - and in particular to avoid the danger of disorder in public places.

I suppose the flaunting of a party label is provocative, but it testifies to a rather nervy state of affairs that it has been found necessary to pass a law to prohibit them.

I shall try sometime to write a note on the amazing complaisance of the Austrians in their present profoundly difficult situation with so uncertain a future. They are cheerful and kind when they might well be sullen and revolutionary. But all one hears of the condition of things makes one apprehensive of the danger of a disruption of society by a revolutionary outbreak.

Anna Látó:
Excerpt from a Subjective Monograph

Anna Látó (Kommando 1906 – 1993) was the daughter of the chief engineer and sister of a forester who worked for the Groedels in the Kommando mountains. She was a writer, journalist, editor, and technical translator. Látó Anna is a pseudonym for Anna Leitner. Anna has first-hand knowledge of the developmental challenges that went into the making of Kommando one of the top three revenue generators for the family. This excerpt gives us insight into some of the difficulties in developing a timber farm such as Kommando, and some of the decisions the Groedels made.

Zadik and His Successors II.
Korunk 1976

Hermann Groedel, the "financial genius," bought, but urgently sold the forest of Neruzsa to a Romanian company called Forestiera in the spring of 1914. For Austrian schillings. Behind the company stood the Wiener Bankverein, which had been speculating with forests acquired cheaply from impoverished peasants for quite some time. Baron Hermann's nose, like a bloodhound's, caught wind of it, sensed that the coming times were not suitable for large ventures. War broke out in August. The Groedel consortium received only the first installment of the selling price. Although Romania, where the forest stretched, had not yet entered the war, the enterprise requiring massive investment suddenly interested no one. Neruzsa preserved its intactness.

After the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Romanian state seized the assets of Austrian banks and distributed them among the original owners. The value of the Schilling plummeted, and the Groedels refused to hear about paying the 1914 purchase price in 1919 rates to the bank after the war. Hermann's cunning in this case backfired like a boomerang: a lawsuit ensued between the seller and the buyer, which lasted for years and ultimately ended in the bank's victory. The Austrian court ruled that both the sale of the forest and the judgment were calculated in Schillings at the time, which was and remained the Austrian currency, so the contract between the

two parties remained valid unchanged. However, at the time of the judgment, Austrian currency was equivalent to nothing.

Later, the economic hurricane of the Great Depression swept away the Viennese megabank with spectacular speed, but at that time, it still swallowed the minnows like a shark. As the successor of Forestiera, it repurchased the fragmented small parcels from the inexperienced villagers in stock transactions—with worthless money; now it wanted to sell the forest to the Transylvanian Forest Industry or the Groedels, who were very reluctant.

They reached an agreement. The bank calculated a fair price, and the Groedels were happy to settle the details, now in stable schillings. The real victims of the great deception were the peasants of the villages, who lost both their forests and their money.

Baron Albert led the negotiations with the bank in Vienna. He eagerly wished for the deal to be closed, eager to secure new sources of funding. His gambling losses amounted to astronomical sums, and his brothers were starting to grow weary of settling his debts every two to three years, so the moment had come to latch onto the already accelerating economic boom. He issued instructions in an urgent manner: a study committee (meaning: forester and engineer) should immediately travel to Neruzsa, assess the quantity and quality of the forests, the terrain conditions, and transmit the data to Vienna immediately.

In early April, amidst the mountains, it's still snowing, freezing; one cannot spend the night outdoors. Just wait a little bit in Vienna. Four weeks later, in May, a few workers trudged into the vast forest to blaze trails, build huts, while the "study committee" continued to idly pass time in the back office designated as a casino. But it seemed their opinion didn't matter much. In another urgent message, Baron Albert determined that four days were enough for the expedition, although in four days, one couldn't even make it around the vast forest. As it turned out, the committee's work was entirely unnecessary because the experts hadn't even set out when Baron Albert had already signed the contract, and even took out a loan for it: "for production purposes." He summoned the engineer and the forester to Vienna via telegram, instructing them to prepare profitability calculations on-site, not just hinting but commanding them to calculate with prices much higher than the daily price of wood. He mocked their doubts with a sarcastic remark: "You gentlemen there in Komárom, in

that godforsaken place, surely don't know the possibilities of modern industry, you hold the current prices sacred, although they could double within days. Clear, gentlemen?"

The barons gathered in Vienna seemed as if they were swallowing "soma" pills, enthusiastically sketching their business prospects. Young Richard, Hermann's son, boasted with sparkling eyes about the state-of-the-art machinery he had purchased for the Skole factory refurbishment. His acquisitions, he said, had already cost more than five million Swiss francs, and this was just the beginning. With more to come! The two alarmed provincials, with deep disapproval in their hearts, watched the frivolous young men following their composed fathers. Indeed, what will happen next? They knew the capacities of the Groedel factories but shrank from the gamble as well. The engineer felt it was his duty to warn the fathers about their sons' recklessness, in case the boom did not last forever. But they laughed at his concern, calling him a conservative man who was unable to keep up with the times.

The engineer and the forester returned home in a gloomy mood. What hadn't occurred to them before now occupied their minds constantly; indeed, they might have aged, although they were still men in their prime, but science was progressing so rapidly that it was truly not easy to digest all the new things. It was undeniable—pondered the engineer—that his son, armed with a fresh diploma from Vienna, theoretically knew more than him, had learned more at university, but he still lacked experience, practical knowledge. The two of them would complement each other perfectly.

They didn't have much time to talk about themselves. The construction in Neruzsa consumed personal grievances and bruised egos, as building was a much grander affair than caring about who said what, as it pertained to the matter of modernity versus obsolescence.

My youth was marked by construction. Unfortunately, I didn't build; I just respectfully listened to the "piloting." Next to our brick stove emitting bucolic heat, during meals, sitting on the steps outside the house, and of course, inside the office, the "piloting" went on for years. We called it "piloting," the construction of bridges built on flattened stakes, and eventually the whole hubbub in Neruzsa. For weeks and months, discussions about "piloting", "adhesion" or "cableway" were as much a part of our lives as air and water. I already knew

enough that "adhesive track" was the somewhat arrogant term for ordinary railway. And as I listened to the debates between the two male members of my family, it slowly dawned on me, too, from the multifaceted task that Neruzsa truly started to interest me. Although according to my father, the architectural engineering profession was least suited for women, especially not the construction of bridges, water, railways, which he himself practiced, he vehemently protested against me becoming an engineer.

The planning of Neruzsa started from the consideration that the timber felled on the distant mountainsides should be processed at the sawmill in Kommando. The entire elaborate forest market was justified by the fact that the forest in the nearer Zagon was dwindling, and if the sawmill wanted to operate at full capacity, as it should, the shortage had to be supplemented from elsewhere, namely Neruzsa. This posed an extremely difficult task for the planners. The timber could only be transported across two watersheds: from the valley of Neruzsa to the valley of Zabola, and from the latter to the valley of Baszka, separated by the Góri watershed. Based on what I heard, I imagined these watersheds as terrible chasms over which the wagons had to be jumped, like horses in a steeplechase. Perhaps I wasn't far from the truth. They pondered various technical solutions until they settled on the following alternative: wire rope railways or adhesive tracks combined with funiculars. More pros and cons followed, there were also unauthorized interventions, but always seriously, quietly; outsiders could never guess that they were feverishly debating, that the rarely dropped, carefully deliberated sentences, technical terms, probing fingers on maps, drawings, formulas carried such weight. Meanwhile, they would pick up a volume from the shelf. There was no zeal, no hustle and bustle. We, too, tiptoed around.

Railway transportation is safer than cableways, as the people of Kommando experienced in railway and funicular construction; they knew all the tricks and dangers of mountain tracks and could use not only their previously acquired knowledge but also the materials from dismantled old railways. Therefore, my father recommended railway transportation combined with hoists, and Bernát Groedel, the chief construction boss, accepted the proposal. He didn't understand much about it, but for the sake of his managerial authority, he insisted on being notified of every detail in advance, he said, for inspection. However, if unforeseen obstacles arose, which were inevitable in such pioneering and ob-

stacle-filled work, then Bernát disappeared like a donkey in the fog, the management washed their hands of it, and it was left to the technical staff to bear the responsibility.

Finally, they reached the blissful state where they could focus solely on construction. This began with the dismantling of the old, disused mountain funicular. My brother, István, called Pista, received instructions to dismantle the funicular and lay out the new track. It was his first engineering task in life because even his summer workshop practice during high school, I cannot call engineering feats even with brotherly bias. My father consciously groomed him for the railway. He fulfilled his task to the satisfaction of the public. Yet, laying out the railway line was hard work. Engineers and workers lived in the forest for months, cutting through the wilderness step by step, their huts attacked by hiding deserters; by evening, when they returned home exhausted from work, they often found only cold spots where their food and warm belongings had been.

Years later, in incomparably more civilized circumstances, I myself spent a few days in a forest hut. Into the hastily assembled shack made of logs, a man could only enter through the opening called a door with bowed head and bent back, and could lie down on the bed made of pine branches. It was a splendid-smelling resting place, a lively cradle. We arrived tired from a thirty-kilometer hike up the mountain, my only desire was to rest. I lay down, and a trance engulfed me; never had a softer, more flexible mattress hugged my limbs. And even softer, with marvelous tranquility, the silence enveloped me. Numbly, I awaited descending into the depth of dreamless sleep. Some soft rustling, tiny buzzing and chirping brought me back. I felt the bed come alive beneath me. Due to my warmth, scent, who knows what radiated from my body, the bugs began to swarm among the pine needles below me, the tiny caterpillars started moving, the nasty little lice, fleas. And because the forest dwellers had taken care of my comfort, they had also spread fresh branches over me so I wouldn't get cold in the chilly night; I felt like the fragrant cradle was crawling over me. I jumped up, shook off the creepy-crawlies from my pajamas, and stepped outside the hut. The moon was shining. The sparkling sky stretched over the forest; above and below it trembled, rustled, sighed gently, breathed, the universe lived. I watched the stars until dawn.

When my brother returned home every other week, dirty and wild-bearded, for Sunday washing, he had to undress outside, and could only enter the house wrapped in a single sheet. With a mysterious smile, he passed us like an eastern sheikh, and disappeared into the bathroom. At least he told stories about the hardships of forest life because my father didn't, he felt that the wilderness was the natural habitat of existence, and he just smiled at those who went "hiking" in the woods. And what was even more wonderful, the giant hut fleas didn't bite him.

The following year, the railway line was completed all the way to the Neruzsa funicular. Or at least as far as the funicular was planned. Urgent letters kept arriving from Vienna: but my father was not a man for hasty things; he carefully considered everything at his desk for now, amidst long silences and half-sentences laden with concern. According to their calculations, the funicular would be approximately 1800 meters long and extremely steep. If they pulled at a speed of 2 meters per second, it would take 900 seconds, or 15 minutes to pull up a car, plus 5 minutes for coupling, so a car's journey on the funicular would take a total of 20 minutes. The planned daily quantity was the delivery of 500 cubic meters of wood, which would require at least 40 cars, so 800 minutes, or, with the inevitable time losses, 13-14 hours of work per day. However, only one shift could work constantly; otherwise, a new camp would have to be built in the mountains and supplied with everything — at the expense of the budget. Ensuring one shift was trouble enough. Should they build two funiculars instead? The construction itself wouldn't significantly increase in cost, the funiculars would be shorter, and could be placed in more advantageous locations; however, the cost of machinery, boilers, etc. would double. What did Bernát think about this?

During the post-war boom, the barons didn't bother themselves with such trifles. Let's just get those funiculars ready, operational, now!

As soon as the weather permitted, they began to lay out the funiculars. Pista, as the engineer of the Transylvanian Forestry, conducted the fieldwork. He worked with six laborers, all of them wearing spurred boots so they wouldn't fall on the steep mountainside. Only young, strong men can work on such difficult terrain. The gradient of the track was sometimes 740%, which can only be imagined by those who have seen steep funiculars. For example, the one in Covászna has only half the gradient and operates with a platform car, which

levels out the angle of descent. On the funiculars in Neruzsa, without platform cars, the wagons moved solely on the tracks, connected to the cable, almost in a hanging position. It was a hair-raising sight. For example, during the transport of twelve-meter logs, there was a nine-and-a-half-meter height difference between the front and back of the car. In such steep conditions, the logs inevitably slid off the car. Even in dry weather, let alone in rain or snow. My father solved the problem ingeniously: he made a makeshift net from old wire ropes, with dangling loops at four corners, which were pulled over the cars on forged iron loops after the net was attached to the ends of the logs. It was a ridiculously simple solution and cost nothing. Assistants made it in the workshop, and the old rope canopy worked for years, in rain or shine, without ever letting a single log slip.

However, first and foremost, the plans had to be realized. The digging itself indicated that hard days were ahead. First, they cut small niches, steps into the side, "standing places" under their feet, then they laid planks over them on support columns, so that falling rocks wouldn't hit them. A select group of Szekler lads, an excellent team, worked on pulling up the funiculars and the fantastic bridges built into them, and despite the serious accidents, there were no fatalities on the construction site, which primarily speaks to the physical fitness, expertise, and vigilance of the builders. They understood their work and nature very well. They crawled with cat-like agility on the steep slopes, even jumped, if necessary, but where they set their feet, they stood firmly on the ground.

The most exciting part of the construction was the building of a bridge planned in one of the funiculars. The seventy-five-meter-long bridge was literally pulled up from the twenty-six-meter depth, extending obliquely between the foot and head of the funicular, corresponding to the gradient. It was the heyday of pioneering engineering. Numerous bridges were built in Neruzsa, all of wood, over streams and ravines, on rocky terrain, but none resembled the one in the funicular. It was pierced like lace, wildly irregular, almost floating; it was hard to imagine that on the transparent lattice structure, with the planks laid sparsely — between them, we could see all the way to the bottom of the ravine — and even higher, the cars, locomotives, and tons of cargo would be traveling on the lonely, shining, fragile rail.

My father named three bridges after his three children: István Bridge, Ágnes Bridge, and Anna Bridge in Neruzsa. And when I first heard the telephone instruction in Kommando to have the locomotive wait at "Anna" for the oncoming train, I felt as if I had been crowned. Undeservedly so.

The engines arrived from Vienna. When they unpacked them, they were shocked to see that the engines and boilers were old, but in good condition, used equipment. And how much they had paid for it! But despite their protests, correspondence, and evidence, someone up there in the Austrian capital had already pocketed a huge sum. Rumor has it that it was Baron Albert himself.

They couldn't do anything else; they installed the machines, boilers. The water tanks quickly filled up, and they fueled the boilers. The transmission wheels were connected with wire ropes wound around the drums and unwound from them. Those certain barrel cars adorned with forged iron ears also arrived. The machines worked perfectly. (However, the seller was cautious; he delivered used but good-quality machines, not wanting to get into trouble.)

Two locomotives, shiny black with gleaming copper decorations, puffed into Neruzsa at the head of a long train, like priests dressed in full regalia on a feast day, with such devotion. Behind them, in two cargo wagons, were the families of the relocating workers, with all their belongings, chicken coops, flour crates, and cradles, then flatcars loaded with fuel, as for now, they had to bring this from the depot too, and finally a car with spare parts and my father, who accompanied the convoy.

First, they transported the fuel down the funiculars. Without people. Then came the difficult lesson: the transfer of the locomotives. This required a person. Someone had to stand on the locomotive, holding a red flag in hand to signal the funicular staff in case of the slightest error. Who would take on this task? Who would voluntarily climb onto the locomotive? A moment of silence. Then the locomotive driver, or as they called him there, the chief, stepped forward, and though not exactly heroically, but in a firm voice, he said: "Look, Mr. Engineer, I brought the locomotive here, I'll drive it from now on, so who else should accompany it down the funicular?" He took the signaling flag, stepped onto the locomotive, and signaled for departure. The rope creaked, trembled. The rollers began to turn with a soft hum. The rope was tense. The locomotive, like a giant black cat, shook itself, humped its back, then stretched out and

slowly started moving. It slowly leaned into the inclined plane, adhered to the rails, its wheels lovingly joined the shiny black ribbon. The locomotive driver stood at his post with legs apart, pressing his back firmly against the toolbox, holding on with his left hand; otherwise, he would have lost his balance and stared straight ahead at the track. They held their breath on the roof. What would happen? Nothing out of the ordinary occurred.

After the coupling of the second locomotive, the chief naturally took the red flag and jumped onto the locomotive. There was no trace of excitement on him, even less fear. The mood on the roof also calmed down.

They checked everything again: starters, switches, ropes. Everything was in perfect order. The women and children can start. In closed passenger cars, so they wouldn't see the steep slope. Come on, get in! However, the women didn't move. They didn't get in. What they saw didn't convince them; on the contrary, it frightened them. They stood stiffly, not saying a word. Persuasion didn't work. A child started crying, a woman screamed. Someone was already wailing. Panic was brewing. Hysteria. "God save us from these pale-faced ones," said a worker, pushing them inside. My father watched the scene helplessly; he couldn't bear women's tears very well. These agitated women shouldn't be left alone, he thought, they might do something foolish. He stood behind the group and with a slightly trembling motion of his narrow hand, he calmed them down. Then, as the last one, he also got into the carriage. He closed the door, latched it, and sat down next to the door on a bundle. Silence fell. Either they calmed down or just fell silent. A bigger boy watched with interest as the carriage leaned; they were just arriving at the bridge; they'll soon switch to the other funicular. "It's as if I had gotten drunk," someone said, and the tension eased. "Well, we've arrived," said my father, and he opened the door. Down below, the husbands welcomed the noisy, proud company. Oh my God! Where did they descend from, and they weren't even afraid, not even a little bit!

After the first shock, they really traveled with the greatest calmness on the inclined carriages, never thinking of climbing the mountains on foot, riding even on the barrel cars, and even on the tops of the barrels, which was strictly prohibited by the regulations. True, it would have been more dangerous to walk along the tracks.

The regular transport began the next day. They transported forty cars of logs as planned in nine hours. On the third day, everyone knew their place and their job:

they fulfilled the norm in seven and a half hours. Later, they only needed seven hours for the forty cars because they slightly increased the speed, and if they paid close attention, they could finish in six and a half hours. The work went excellently.

My father returned home in a good mood. He reported the results to Brasov, Vienna, and Budapest. A lord doesn't wonder, a lord doesn't praise or criticize. Not even a "thank you" was uttered. It was the most natural thing in the world that the funiculars were completed and working, the trees were cut down, transported, processed, sold, and money flowed into the cash register.

Only a Swiss trade journal published an appreciative article about the ingenious and extremely cheap solution in Neruzsa.

And once again, always anew: Kommando. What was it like during my childhood? When lush and untouched, cool serene forests covered the slopes of the mountains. The peaks stretched up to the sky around the plateau, the slopes embraced by coniferous and deciduous trees, while under their feet, ferns hid in the dense blue shadows, and white-spotted red toadstools nestled in the undergrowth. In Hosszúegyenes, near Kommando, right where the train would let out a tremendous blast before arriving at the rugged little station, so everyone at the depot would know: the number 15 was coming, and they should prepare appropriately to receive it — in Hosszúegyenes, it was hardly possible to penetrate the primeval vegetation. We, the children, only dared to venture to its edge, and shuddered as we gazed into the mysterious blue haze.

When was it more beautiful? In spring, autumn, or winter? When it awoke, buds burst and the beeches turned green, when the meadows filled with flowers? Or in the hours of farewell, when the colors changed from green to gold, red, and brown, in bird songs, and insect buzzing? Perhaps it was still most beautiful in winter when the snow piled high on the dark green pine branches, and the beeches, like black and white graphics, painfully extended their bare arms, and the heartbreaking beauty of richness and deprivation was enveloped in a shimmering blue sparkle, covered with a sparkling blanket of frost. Our sled started off promisingly slowly down the mountainside, between our stomachs and hearts, somewhere in our abdominal muscles, a delightfully chilling anticipation slowly accumulated, then off we went! We raced down the steep slope, snow swirling around us, swept away in a tumult of ecstatic giggles, fear, pain, and ecstasy. Perhaps this moment, this would have been happiness?

Twilight of Money Kings

[NOTE:] The following excerpt is included to note the significant influence of the Groedel Group on the finances of Austria...

Kassai Ujság, May 13, 1933

(From our own correspondent.) For those who manage the values of humanity entrusted to them, the time of crisis is an unlikely challenge. Today, "situations are changing rapidly and the world's money masters must be vigilant if they are to do their duty faithfully. Proponents of so-called classical capitalism claim the same thing: that without coercive measures, economic forces would continue to operate as they do today, but the objective observer can see that the economic situation and the distribution of apolitical forces change frequently and that the money kings often have to choose new paths.

The short version of good public policy is: all the right people in all the right places. This turbulent age has greater needs and adds to this principle: every man in the right place at the right time. Many people fail to see the changes that are about to take place, time is running out for them and in almost all cases leading to their downfall. The great spectacle is unfolding before our eyes: famous monarchs are losing their thrones and returning to obscurity from one level to the next. No less a personage than Charles Mitchell, the legendary chairman of the National City Bank, was forced to resign a few days ago, and his fading power could not even save him from the jail.

No sooner had he emerged from the world's stupor than the troubles of the Niederösterreichische Escompt Gesellshaaft became public[136]. Only the Austrian government's emergency decrees on Sunday and Monday revealed that Austria's taxpayers would have to make further sacrifices for the sake of the two remaining major Austrian banks. Since then, little news has leaked out of the seething cauldron of the Austrian financial world, and it was only through the big foreign press that the public learned that the sacrifices of hundreds of millions of Austrian shillings to the Austrian Treasury would also bring down the management of Niederösterreische.

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[136] *This is the bank that demanded 7 million Swiss Francs from the Groedels in 1931/2.*

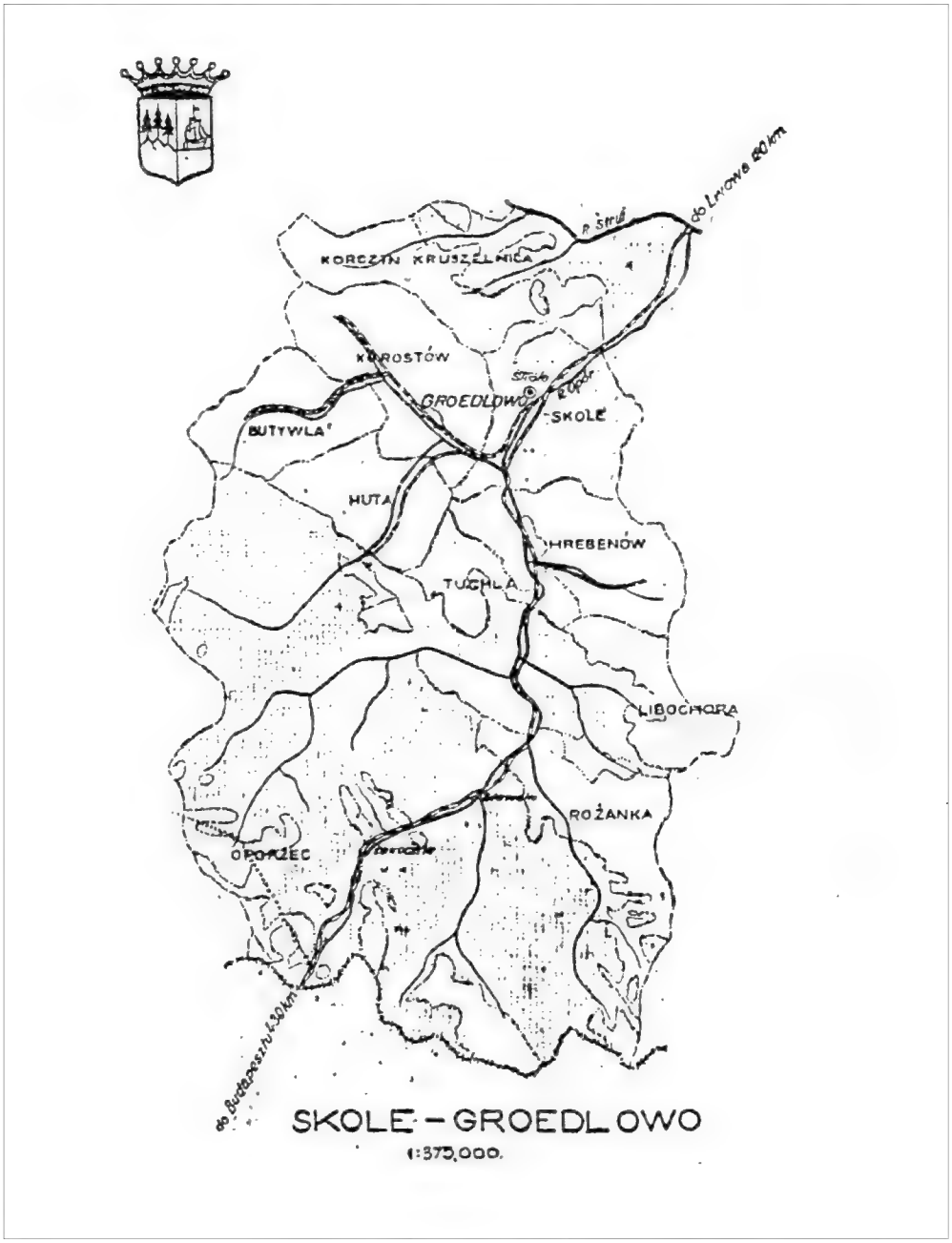
...

Here is the case of the Grödel group; hundreds and hundreds of millions have been lost in the timber business over the last few years. The final accounts for Grödel have not yet been settled, but insiders claim that the difficulties in Lower Austria are to some extent due to the Grödel group.

MAPS
Budapest 1893

Groedelowo

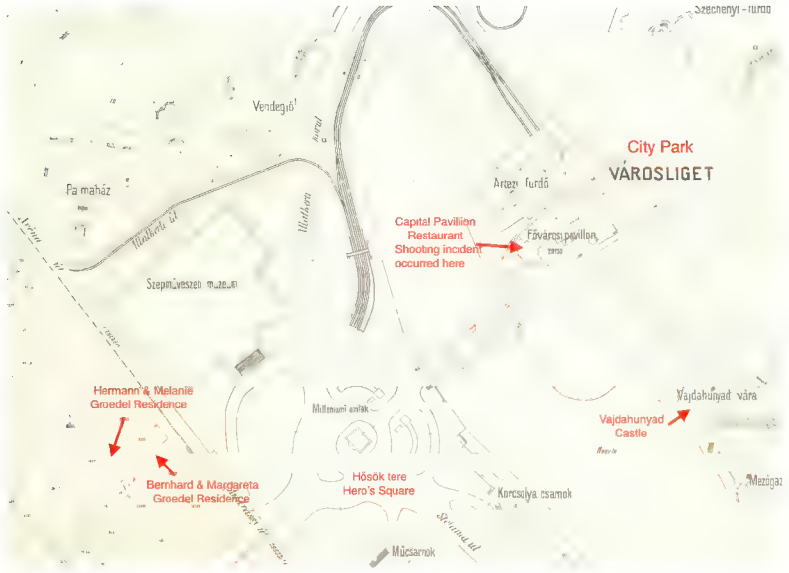
This map depicts the property owned and managed by the Groedel family in Skole.



Varosliget (Budapest's City Park)

View of the National Millennium Exhibition in City Park on an 1896 graphic (Source: FSZEK Budapest Collection)

The homes of Hermann and Bernat were across the street from the park, which is not shown, but slightly off the bottom-center of the picture. See map below.



MISCELLANEOUS PHOTOS

Residences of Hermann and Bernard Groedel

Melanie Weiner Groedel

Irén, Paula, Melanie, Stefi

Photo taken ca. 1896 (before Irén and Albert)

(l-r) Albert, Arthur, Melanie, Richard, Otto (1916)

Assistant, Melanie, Hermann

Hermann, Melanie, assistants

Stefie & Irén 1914

Iren Groedel,

September 6, 1913, Wiener Salonblatt

Irene Baronesse Groedel von Gyulafalva.

Text Seite 15. Hofatelier Strelisky, Budapest.

Janos Svab (jr.), Iren Groedel Kussevich Svab, Zora Kussevich

Izabella von Tartsay and Mary Groedel (child)

1924

Regina Löwy Weiner (mother of Baroness Melanie Groedel)

Richard Groedel, Wiener Salonblatt,

September 6, 1913

Richard Baron Groedel von Gyulafalva.

Text Seite 15. Hofatelier Erdélyi, Budapest.

Paula Groedel Lonyay & Istvan

Herr und Frau Stefan von Lónyay geb. Paula Baronin Groedel.

Text Seite 9. Atelier Frau Grüß Gasbuiel, Budapest

REPÚBLICA DOS ESTADOS UNIDOS DO BRASIL

MODÊLO S.C. 139

FICHA CONSULAR DE QUALIFICAÇÃO

Esta ficha, expedida em duas vias, será entregue à Polícia Maritima e à Imigração no pôrto de destino

Nome por extenso PAULA LONYAY GROEDERL.

Admitido em território nacional em caráter permanente. (temporário ou permanente)

Nos termos do art. 9° letra - do dec. n. 7967, de 1945

Lugar e data de nascimento Maramarossziget, Hungria, 9.6.1893.

Nacionalidade apatrida Estado civil viuva.

Filiação (nome do Pai e da Mãe) Hermann Groederl e Melanie Weiner Profissão doméstica.

Residência no país de origem Hotel Gloria, Rio de Janeiro.-

NOME IDADE SEXO

FILHOS MENORES DE 18 ANOS: VISTO AUTORIZADO PELO TELEGRAMA Nº16, DA SECRETARIA DE ESTADO DAS RELAÇÕES EXTERIORES, EM 26.3.55.-

SÊLO CONS

EMBAIXADA DO BRASIL

SERVIÇO CONSULAR

Título de Identidade e Trânsito N° 29.- Passaporte n. expedido pelas autoridades de Ministério de Estado da Rep. de Cuba na data Havana, 16.11.1954.-

Consulado do Brasil HAVANA - CUBA

visado sob n. 72.- em 29 de Março de 19 55.

ASSINATURA DO PORTADOR:

Paula de Lonyay

CÔNSUL, SECRETÁRIO ou FUNCIONÁRIO

Primeiro Secretário, Encarregado do Serviço consular da Embaixada

NOTA—Esta ficha deve ser preenchida á máquina pela autoridade consular, sendo as duas vias em original.

Sandor Lonyay (son of Paula and Istvan):

July 8, 2001

MISCELLANEOUS ARTICLES

This is a translation of an article from Przemysl I Handel Drzewny[137] of 21st September 1929[138]

The Barons Groedel, Their Property and their Acknowledged Status in Poland
In a beautiful corner of East-Small-Poland, on the northern slopes of the forest-covered Carpathians, the eye of a visitor is caught by a forest complex which envelopes the delightful setting of a number of villages.

This woodland is the property of Baron Groedel, the potentate of the timber industry. The family is successful in not only maintaining its ancestorial estate, but also has expanded the estate which is beautiful and is managed in an exemplary manner.

For centuries, since the privilege of King Ladislaus Jagello, the family name and ownership of the estate has been well known, and the woodlands covered a large area of 24,000 ha, between the Oper and the Orawa Rivers. Because of the state-owned main railway line Stry-Lawozne and the connection of a 48 km. long narrow-gauge railway line to the center of the estate, there existed the basis for a flourishing industry.

The abovementioned narrow gauge railway line, one of the first ones built and completed in 1892, is considered one of the best maintained in the country and enables the development of the natural valleys for timber export and the easy transfer of an annual capacity of 70-80,000m of sawn timber. Everything is designed and built to last, from the oak railway sleepers to the railway bridge which rests on stone columns. The whole estate organization points to the family's intention to build up the estate.

On the Skole Estate there are many different timber species, however in the main, like in all other Carpathian areas, there are pine and fir.

Hot houses, fruit gardens, the Palais Park, the guest house, senior staff mass and the pretty houses of the employees make the proprietor's understanding of social obligations evident.

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[137] *Wood Industry and Trade (Polish magazine but the article was written in German)*

[138] *The article was provided by Richard Knebel from Sydney, Australia.*

It should also be mentioned that besides approximately 4,000 persons of the Colony in Groedlow, nearly the whole population of the city and the county of Skole is involved, directly or indirectly, in making a living from one of the many estate-owned industrial companies.

Founded in 1811[139] and registered in 1886 as "Groedel Brothers" the proprietors are managing the company. Today the trademark "Skole" is known and recognized worldwide. Two sawmills located in different territories, but under one management, produce up to 300,000m3 of sawn timber of many species for the numerous customers locally as well as abroad. After the World War the sawmill in Groedlow was repaired, mechanized and rationalized. It is equipped with 10 high speed gang saws as well as a number of auxiliary machines which were mainly purchased in Sweden. In 1928, a unique power plant worth approximately one million zloty was installed. It consists of a 1200Hp steam engine and a 1000Kws generator, the latter, in addition to the 150Hp turbine plant in Pohoryle, was used to produce and transform electric power for technical purposes and for lighting the whole colony. A special cross-cut saw makes the logs ready for cutting, two large storage areas for logs as well as for sawn timber spread over 3km in which piles of various types of timber are stacked. A newly built section producing timber crates utilizes small pieces of timber and offcuts to the best possible advantage. The Director of the industrial plants in Groedlow is the well-known and recognized timber expert, Mr. Geza Roboz.

Traditionally the University of Lemberg conducts annual visits to the Skole Estate. After a hospitable welcome by the Skole Management, professors and students have the opportunity to become familiar with various mountain forestry techniques and methods as well as the practical side of timber processing.

Pleasant impressions stayed in my memory from the time when I graduated from the Faculty of Forestry of the University of Lemberg and when together with Professor C. Kochanovski and Mr. A. Ozikowski, who was an engineer, I visited the Skole Estate. At the time we had the opportunity to study and to appreciate the complete utilization of forest timber, furthermore in practical terms we were made familiar with the timber processing industry by the explanations given by the Management of the Skole Estate and by those given by

[139] *Friedberg assumed*

our professors and the managers of the individual timber processing sections. At the conclusion of that visit Mr. Richard Groedel gave a lecture on the subject:

"Working methods, and the exploitation of forests, and the management of the timber industry in the United States of America and Sweden."

Mr. Richard Groedel had previously visited those two countries to investigate their achievements in the timber industry. This lecture was delivered with exceptional realism and it was evident that his knowledge of the subject was vast so much so that he roused our interest in the subject, the end result being that he received enthusiastic applause.

The unpretentious viewpoints of the Barons Groedel deserve to be accentuated and rewarded with a few words of appreciation for their contribution to the development of the forest and timber processing industry. The Skole Estate is a model for many other forest and timber processing companies.

Compared with the Groedel brothers' company the acclaim given to British companies, i.e. "Century," or their subsidiaries, is inflated and overrated.

Finally, the well-known hunting districts of Skole deserve to be mentioned. These districts are described in glowing terms by the hunter Ejsmond and the poets Orski and Wacek. As a matter of fact, the trophies won by the hunters of Skole won first prize at an exhibition held in Lemberg and Posen. At the exhibition held in Posen, the exhibits from Skole won the following prizes:

- Gold Metal for the whole collection
- Gold Cup for the collection of Carpathian stag antlers
- 6 Gold plaques
- 8 Silver medals
- 3 Bronze medals

The Budapest Ghetto

Source: SHOAH Resource Center at Yad Vashem[140]

[This is included because Judit Svab and her mother, Irén Groedel Svab, were in the ghetto before escaping, as recounted in Zora Svab Maliga's story.]

Budapest: Capital of Hungary. The 200,000-member strong Jewish community of Budapest was first subjected to anti-Jewish legislation in 1938 and 1939, as was the rest of Hungarian Jewry. They also suffered from the expansion of the Hungarian labor service system in 1941.

Despite this, from the outbreak of World War II in September 1939 to the German occupation of Hungary on March 19, 1944, the Jews of Budapest were generally shielded from Nazi atrocities. Thousands of refugees from Austria, Poland, and Slovakia streamed into Budapest in search of a safe haven. However, when the Nazis invaded, the situation became unbearable very quickly. Despite warnings from various world leaders, Hungarian regent Miklos Horthy chose to give in to German demands to deport his country's Jews. First, the Gestapo set up a Judenrat (in Hungarian, Zsido Tanacs) under the leadership of Samu Stern. This council was charged with governing the Jews of Budapest and informing Jewish Councils in the provinces about decrees made by the Nazi authorities. Next, Jewish shops were closed down, and many Jews were imprisoned in the Kistarcsa camp. By April 12, 1944, 1,500 Jewish-owned apartments had been taken away to be used by non- Jews.

At the end of June, instead of being confined to a Ghetto, the Jews of Budapest were transferred to 2,639 buildings, scattered all over the city, which were marked by the Star of David as being for Jews. Some 17,500 Jews were sent to Auschwitz, just before Horthy halted the first wave of deportations.

Horthy decided to end the deportations on July 7, mostly as a result of pressure from Western governments. This respite gave the Jews left in Budapest time to consider rescue and escape options. Foreign diplomats sponsored, in part, by the American government's War Refugee Board began setting the stage for the rescue of Budapest's Jews. These included Raoul Wallenberg from Sweden,

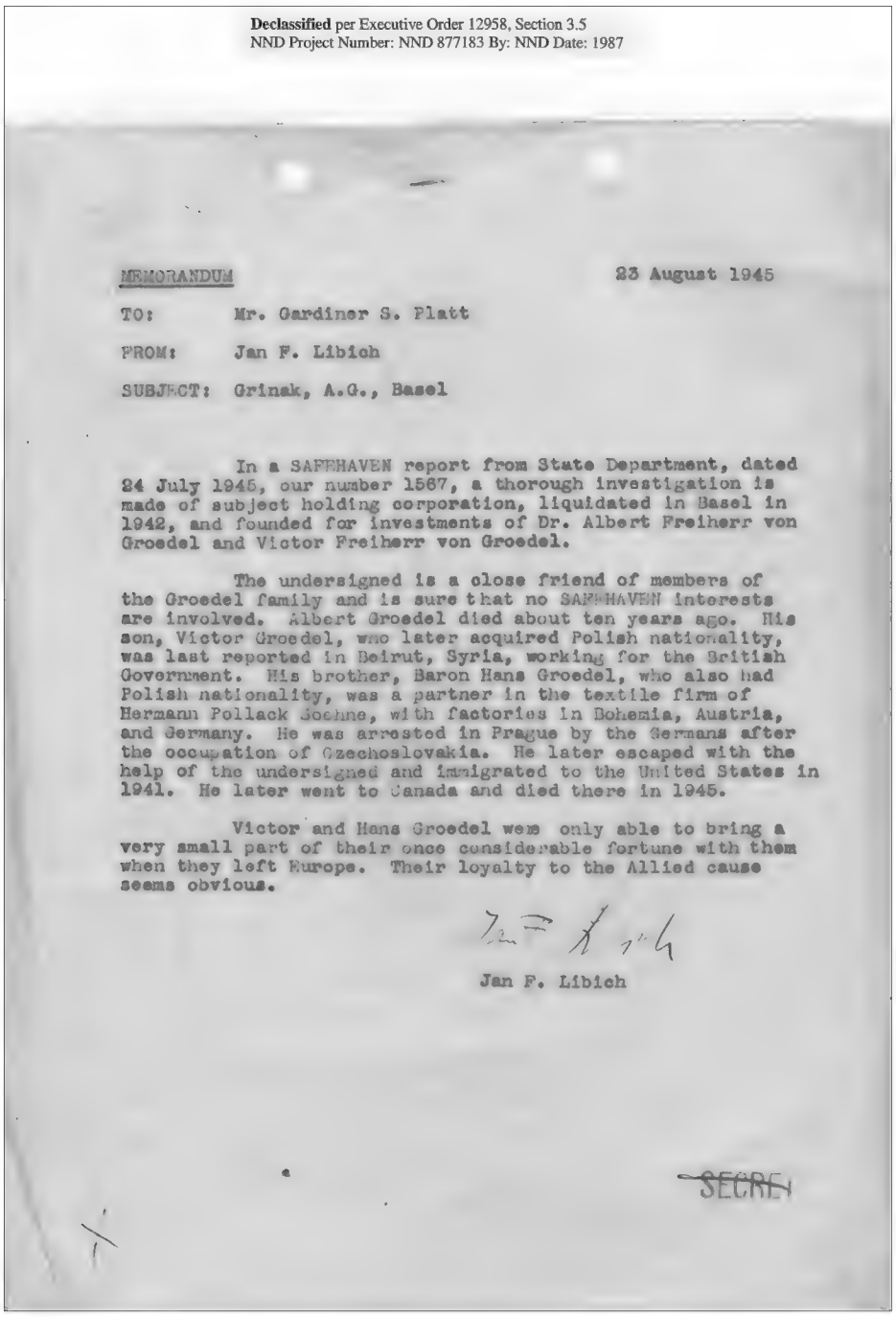
[140] *https://www.yadvashem.org/odot_pdf/Microsoft%20Word%20-%206089.pdf*

Carl Lutz from Switzerland, and others. The diplomats often complained to the authorities about their terrible treatment of the Jews, and helped Jewish rescue groups supply food, fuel, and medicine to the Jewish community. They also attempted to protect Jews from being deported by giving them "protective passports." Some Jews also obtained false identity papers from the church, while others tried to get deportation exemptions from the government. Those Jews who held protective documents were put under diplomatic protection, and housed in safe residences provided by the diplomats. Often, Jews holding false protective documents—many of which were issued by the Zionist youth movement underground—were also protected by the rescuers.

In October 1944 the Germans overthrew Horthy's government and gave authority to the ARROW CROSS PARTY. This group of Hungarian fascists quickly embarked upon a reign of terror. During the first few days of their rule, 600 Jews were murdered in Budapest. Next, many Jews were forced to build fortifications. By November 8, deportations were resumed, full steam ahead. On November 13 a ghetto was established and 70,000 Jews were gradually moved in. At the same time, the foreign diplomats set up an "international ghetto" as a safe haven for those Jews who held protective documents. From November 8 to December 24, nearly 80,000 Jews were sent on a DEATH MARCH toward the Austrian border. The rescuing diplomats followed the columns and removed those Jews with protective passports.

During December 1944 and January 1945, the Arrow Cross violence increased, and 20,000 Jews were shot and thrown into the Danube River. The Germans planned to liquidate the Budapest Ghetto, but the Soviet army reached the city first, conquering Pest in mid-January and Buda a month later. Some 120,000 Budapest Jews had survived.

SAFEHAVEN Reports



Declassified per Executive Order 12958, Section 3.5
NND Project Number: NND 877183 By: NND Date: 1987

MEMORANDUM 23 August 1945

TO: Mr. Gardiner S. Platt

FROM: Jan F. Libich

SUBJECT: Grinak, A.G., Basel

In a SAFEHAVEN report from State Department, dated 24 July 1945, our number 1567, a thorough investigation is made of subject holding corporation, liquidated in Basel in 1942, and founded for investments of Dr. Albert Freiherr von Groedel and Victor Freiherr von Groedel.

The undersigned is a close friend of members of the Groedel family and is sure that no SAFEHAVEN interests are involved. Albert Groedel died about ten years ago. His son, Victor Groedel, who later acquired Polish nationality, was last reported in Beirut, Syria, working for the British Government. His brother, Baron Hans Groedel, who also had Polish nationality, was a partner in the textile firm of Hermann Pollack Sochne, with factories in Bohemia, Austria, and Germany. He was arrested in Prague by the Germans after the occupation of Czechoslovakia. He later escaped with the help of the undersigned and immigrated to the United States in 1941. He later went to Canada and died there in 1945.

Victor and Hans Groedel were only able to bring a very small part of their once considerable fortune with them when they left Europe. Their loyalty to the Allied cause seems obvious.

Jan F. Libich

~~SECRET~~

Declassified per Executive Order 12958, Section 3.5
NND Project Number: NND 877183 By: NND Date: 1987

COPY Enclosure no. 1 to Despatch No. 1222 (Pol.) from
eb dated July 24, 1945 from the American Legation, Bern.

SECRET American Consulate
Basel, Switzerland
July 12, 1945

By Courier

The Honorable
Leland Harrison,
American Minister,
Bern.

Sir:

I have the honor to refer to the Legation's secret letter of June 15, 1945 (file no. 850.3/3H3 No. 14; HMA/EGR/eb), and subsequent correspondence concerning OTTO SCHMEE UND A.G., Basel, and GRIMAK A.G., Basel, and to enclose additional information concerning the last mentioned firm in the form of a copy of a Dun report and
1/ a memorandum on the results of an examination of the re-
2/ cords of the Trade Registry of the Canton Baselstadt.

As will be observed from the enclosures, Grimak A.G., which was founded in 1927 and liquidated in 1942, appears to have been a holding company holding property of Albert and Victor Freiherr von GROEDEL, Austrian nationals and owners of land estates, then residing at Ungargasse 43, Vienna 3.

The Consulate is continuing its efforts to obtain information as to the exact nature and location of the property of the Groedels which was held by Grimak A.G. and the disposition which was made of it upon the company's liquidation, and will in due course report to the Legation its findings.

Respectfully yours,

/s/ Walter H. Sholes

Walter H. Sholes
American Consul General

Enclosures:

1. Dun Report
2. Memorandum.

Declassified per Executive Order 12958, Section 3.5
NND Project Number: NND 877183 By: NND Date: 1987

40 Y Enclosure No. 5 to Despatch No. 1215 (S.A.No. 30)
Feb dated July 24, 1945 from the American Embassy, Bern.

SECRET

Concerning GRIMAK A.G.,
c/o Dr. Otto Scheidegger, Barfüsserhof, Basel.

The following information was obtained from the records of the Basler Handelsregister.

Grimak A.G. was founded at Basel in 1927 with a capital of Fr. 500,000 divided into 500 bearer shares of 1000 francs each. The shares were subscribed by the founders as follows:

Dr. Albert Freiherr von GROEDEL — 245 shares
Grossgrundbesitzer,
Ungargasse 43,
Vienna 3
(Represented by Dr. Paul Scherrer, lawyer, Basel)

Victor Freiherr von GROEDEL — 245 shares
Austrian national,
Grossgrundbesitzer,
Ungargasse 43,
Vienna 3
(Represented by Hans Arne, clerk, Basel)

Dr. Otto SCHEIDEGGER — 5 shares
Lawyer, Basel

Dr. Georges OTT — 5 shares
Lawyer, Riehen (Baselstadt)

The shares were fully paid up and their value, amounting to Fr. 500,000, was deposited on May 16, 1927, in the Basel Branch of Comptoir d'Escompte de Geneve.

From 1927 to March 23, 1932, the board of directors was composed of the following persons:

Dr. Albert Freiherr von GROEDEL — President
(With right of sole signature)

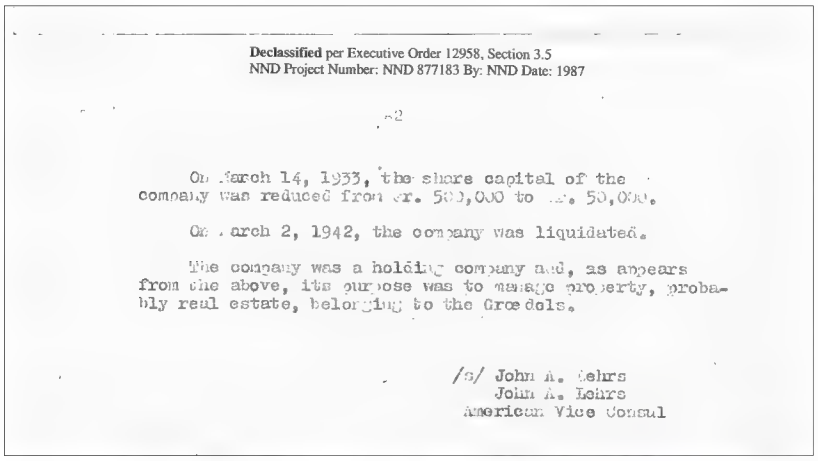
Dr. Otto SCHEIDEGGER — Vice President
(With right of sole signature)

Victor Freiherr von GROEDEL — Director

Dr. Georges OTT — Director

On March 23, 1932, the two Groedels and Ott resigned, leaving Dr. Otto Scheidegger the sole member of the board.

On



Declassified per Executive Order 12958, Section 3.5
NND Project Number: NND 877183 By: NND Date: 1987

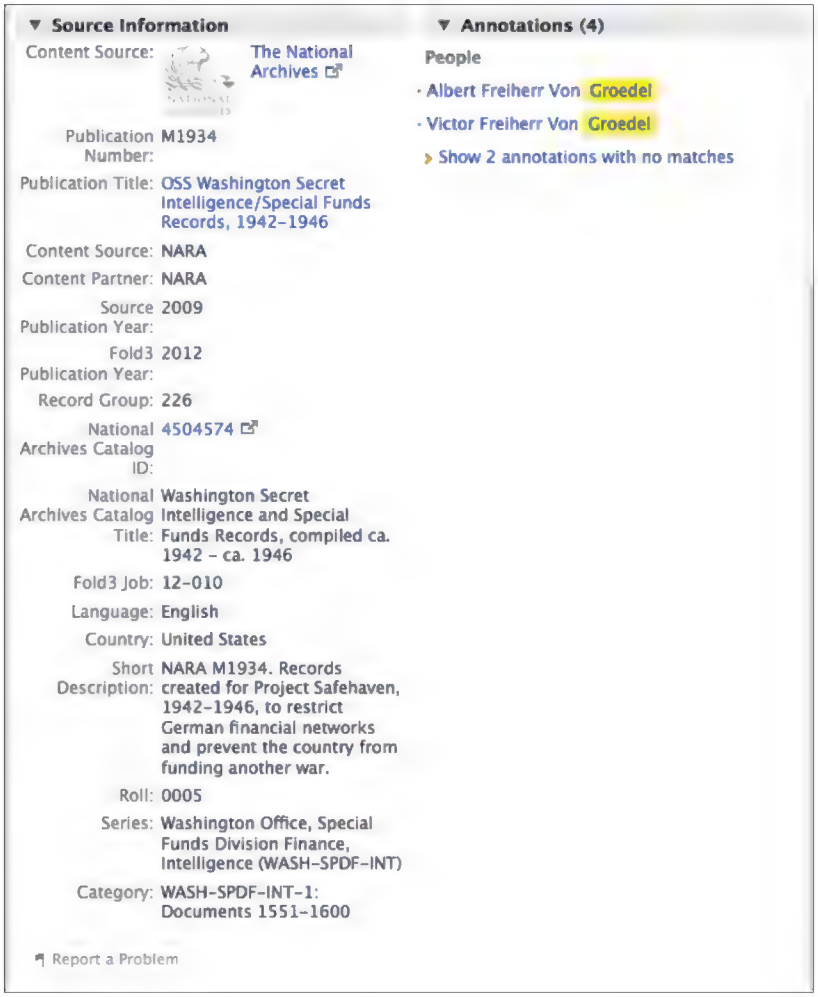
-2-

On March 14, 1933, the share capital of the company was reduced from Kr. 500,000 to Kr. 50,000.

On March 2, 1942, the company was liquidated.

The company was a holding company and, as appears from the above, its purpose was to manage property, probably real estate, belonging to the Groedels.

/s/ John A. Lehrs
John A. Lehrs
American Vice Consul



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▼ Annotations (4)

People

- Albert Freiherr Von Groedel
- Victor Freiherr Von Groedel

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INDEX TO HERMANN'S LETTERS

#	Date	To/From	Where Written	Key Words	# Pages	Hand/ Typed	Summary
2	7-Apr-1903	To Hermann Nussbaum	Budapest	Ship, financial, prices, family, engagement, business	3	T	1. HN to pay HG for an order. 2. Discussed purchase of steamers Melanie Groedel and Margit Groedel from England. 3. Discussion about Romanian business. 4. HN's engagement to be married
3	3-Jul-1903	To Hermann Nussbaum	Budapest, Bathory ut	nobility, marriage	1	T	Thank you reply regarding congratulatory note on attaining nobility. Hermann sends his approval for HN to get married.
4	22-Mar-1905	To Hermann Nussbaum	Budapest, Lendvay ut	operation, professor, Emilie, uncle Ludwig, debt, finance	3	T	1. Reply to a postcard from HN. HN's wife's operation went well. 2. Emile's husband received a professorship. 3. In correspondance with uncle Ludwig 4. HN intends to repay a debt to HG
5	14-Sep-1905	To Hermann Groedel	Budapest	Barony	1	T	Hermann receives notification that he and his brothers have become barons. From Br. Geza Feherváry
6	20-Sep-1905	To Hermann Nussbaum	M.Szighet	Pain, congratulations, honor, dignified	2	H	1. HG discusses pain in his hand. 2. In MS since 4 July. 3. Being congratulated on becoming baron and high honor for the family, family is now dignified.
7	23-Sep-1905	To Hermann Nussbaum	M. Szighet	Jewish, family, distinction, congratulations,	4	H	In the letter, the newly minted "Baron" Groedel seems very pleased that his hard work has been successful for himself and his family, and he notes that he and his brothers are only the fifth Hungarian Jewish family to be Baron. Everyone seems pleased, including his daughters, although he says nothing about Melanie. He appreciates that ennoblement is hereditary, and that it brings distinction to the family (and more specifically to his five sons). He notes that he has received about 500 congratulatory messages from both the town's Jews and Christians. A quite notable passage is when Hermann writes that he gave a speech to the congregation in Szefárd saying, "...I hold here to Jewish courage as long as I will live," possibly meaning that he would continue being Jewish and never convert. I think this says a lot about his personal fortitude regarding the antisemitism he saw and experienced, which was significant, especially from some in the press. He wouldn't do it himself until age 63, but he allowed the rest of his family to convert as needed, understanding how challenging life might be for them if they didn't, and to be able to integrate more easily with others of nobility. This sentiment is also noted in a later letter to Hermann Nussbaum about HN's son not looking Jewish. Hermann then writes a little about the business and its success, and how it wouldn't be possible without the four new ships he recently purchased, with another forthcoming in a few months. Hermann mentions that he will be traveling to Hamburg and then to Frankfurt and will visit with his cousin, and points out that he is currently alone in the castle with a multitude of servants including 5 young ladies from various countries. At the end, he includes a brief humorous postscript that - this reminds him of his younger days.
8	5-Oct-1905	To Hermann Nussbaum	M. Sziget	Reply, busy, forest purchase. Citizen,	1	H	1. Notes that HN must have been busy with business because of his delayed reply. But HG is not busy. 2. Big negotiation for a forest purchase tomorrow in his summer residence. 3. HG became an honorary citizen of MS.

8a	5-Oct-1905	To Unnamed female cousin	M. Sziget	Reply, visit, cousin	1	H	1. Hermann thanks his cousin for her kind comments (most likely for becoming baron). 2. Discusses the possibility of traveling to meet with her and her mother, whom he has never met.
9	21-Dec-1905	To Hilda Nussbaum, cousin	Unk (probably Budapest)	Receipt, reply, finance, Goldschmidt, inheritance, tax, plums,	1	T	1. Is in possession of her receipt. Transfers money to Ludwig and Hilda Goldschmidt (for an unspecified reason, but may have to do with a court decision). 2. HG is happy to hear that Hilda's husband's health is reassuring. 3. HG is happy to hear that Hermann N. is happy with his plum shipment. 4. Sends greetings from "my wife."
10	23-Dec-1907	To Hermann Nussbaum	Budapest, Bathory ut	Skole, Schmidt, finance, business, Albert, Pollack, Vienna, deal, Faatz, Jewish	3	T	1. Hermann discusses the purchase of the Skole estate from the Schmidt family. 2. Discusses Albert's in-law's business 3. Business in Romania, selling some forest for a large profit 4. Mentions how Skole is running smoothly. 5. Notes that HN's young son will be fine because he doesn't look Jewish
11	27-Dec-1910	To Baron von Giesl	Budapest, Bathory ut	America, USA, New York, Excellency, Florida, Schulhof, Stenzel, Arthur, Gotha, Coburg, Richard, Dragoon,	2	T	Letter to Field Marshal Lieutenant Baron von Giesl regarding the Groedel trip to the USA.
12	29-Dec-1910	To Hermann Nussbaum	Budapest, Bathory ut	New York, America, Vancouver, Seattle, Florida, Theodor Grödel, Newark, Schulhof, Coburg Gotha, Bernhard, Hirschhorn, Ulrich, finance, SWAG, cartel	3	T	Summary of the trip to New York. Arthur is on the west coast. Bernhard visited. Dr. Jur Julius Ulrich
13	29-Jul-1911	To Hermann Nussbaum	Skole		8+	H	Discusses trip to Germany: Aussig, Dresden and Berlin. Mentions a trip to France with Melanie and daughter. Paris, Grand Prix (Le Mans, Luzern, and St. Moritz. Lots of business discussions. Names include Leopold Salvator, Prince August von Sachsen-Coburg und Gotha. Also, Karl Ritter von Morawitz, president of Creditbank. Mentions a purchase of land in Budapest.
14	18-May-1912	Newspaper Article			1	T	Article corrects error in previous article and publishes info about the Groedel companies.
15	21-Jul-1912	To Hermann Nussbaum	Skole		4	T	Missing pages 1. Family discussion 2. Business details; property acquisitions and financing
16	30-Jul-1912	To Hermann Nussbaum	Czernowitz	property purchase, travel, Budapest	1	H	1. Thanks HN for writing kind words in previous correspondance. 2. Discusses property acquisitions and driving.
17	16-Nov-1913	From FM Giesl	Prag	Hunting story		T	Giesl writes the story of his hunting trip with the forester Vodicka.
18	6-Dec-1913	Letter from Ludwig Hahn	Frankfurt	Hunting. Recollecting meeting in Frankfurt. Rothberg, Herzfeld	1	T	Director Ludwig Hahn writing to Hermann in thanks for the time spent together in Frankfurt, attaching a letter from Giesl about his hunting trip in Skole (not included), and knowing common people in Emil Rothberg and Mr. Herzfeld.

19	21-Dec-1913	Letter from cousins Dr. Philipp Rothbarth and son Emil	Frankfurt	father-in-law, reception, reply, meeting, Frankfurt, Groedel parents.invitation, Budapest, plums, Prince Hohenlohe, Countess Durkheim, son Philipp.	5	T	Replies to two letters from Hermann. Notes father-n-law died on the night of a reception for his daugther (ambiguous if it was FIL's daughter or Rothbarth's. Discusses meeting Hermann, and notes he was at Zadig & Fani's wedding ceremony as a child. Notes how impressed he is with the honor Hermann has brought to the Groedel name and to his companies in Germany and abroad. Requested a company brochure. Thanks for an invitation to Budapest, and thanks Hermann for the plums from his garden. Hopes for a return visit. Son Philipp adds content below. Appreciates the stimulating discussion they had when Hermann visited. Discusses life philosophy.
20	29-Dec-1913	To Count Koziebrodski	Budapest	Health, Skole, hunting, Hesse, Grand Duke	2	T	Happy that the count has recovered from health problems. Would like to welcome the count to Skole for a hunt. Mentions the discussion with the count about letting the Grand Duke know about Hermann's gratitude and attributing his success for having Hessen origins. [I have included a photo of the count in the doc -jz]
21	4-Jan-1914	From Count Koziebrodski	Stuttgart	New Year, Galicia, health, crop failure, Grand Duke of Hesse, Darmstadt	1	T	
22	7-Jan-1914	To Count Koziebrodski	Budapest	Good health, Skole, hunting, Grand Duke Hesse,	3	T	
23	9-Jan-1914	To Hermann Nussbaum	Budapest, Bathory ut	Koziebrodski	1	T	Enclosed copy of a letter sent to the count re: Grand Duke of Hesse.
24	3-Feb-1914	To Bertha Groedel Hilb	Unk	Family tree	1	T	Requesting family tree information for her family, aunt Elise, and cousins Nussbaum, Ferdinand Schulhof, and Hirschhorn.
25	29-Apr-1914	To Hermann Nussbaum	Budapest, Bathory ut	Nobility diploma, Orient,	1	T	Sends copy of nobility papers. Went to Orient for business and pleasure. Family came, too. One son appointed as Consul in Canada, other son as MP in Transylvania
26	19-Jul-1914	From Count Koziebrodski	Stuttgart	Grand Duke, Hesse	1	T	Thanks Hermann for his messages and newspaper articles that Hermann penned. Received Hermann's letter of the 12th. Notes that HRH, Grand Duke of Hesse, has accepted Hermann's invitation in principle to hunt in Skole. Provides advice for a return letter to the Duke.
27	20-Jul-1914	To Grand Duke of Hesse	Budapest	Meeting, Skole, hunt, hunting, Archduke, Gotha	2	T	Hermann thanks the Grand Duke for the special audience they had. Hermann reminds the Duke about considering attending a hunt in Skole. Hermann suggests September as a good date for the hunt. Hermann notes that Archdule Leopold Salvator and Prince Ludwig August of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha will be attending.
28	21-Jul-1914	To Hermann Nussbaum	Skole		2	H	
29	10/?/1914	From Mayor Antal Szollony	M. Sziget	Nobility, archives	1	T	Mayor Szollony thanks Hermann, an honorary citizen, for sending his nobility papers for the MS archives.
30	6-Nov-1922	To Wife of H. Nussbaum	Budapest, Bathory ut	Condolences	2	T	Condolences on the passing of his cousin, Hermann Nussbaum
31	29-Nov-1928	From Richard to Fritz Nussbaum	Vienna	Family Tree	2	T	Discussion of family tree. Asks for Nussbaum family vital information.

PANAMA STUDIES PAMPHLET

Author's Note: In 2008, I asked Kathy Lonyay—a cousin of the Groedel family and a schoolteacher in the Chicago area—to translate a Hungarian-language document titled *Panama Studies* by Árpád Zigány. Kathy obtained a copy of the pamphlet and translated the first six pages and part of the seventh. Unfortunately, we lost contact over the years, and the translation remained unfinished. In 2020, I commissioned the remainder to be translated by Attila Balint, a native Hungarian working through Upwork.com. Beginning midway through the section "Tax Evasion, Breach of Contract," you may notice a stylistic shift. Kathy's portion reflects her fluent American style, while Attila's is more literal. I have attempted to edit Attila's translation for clarity, though some differences remain. As I've discovered, translation—especially of polemical material—is as much art as craft.

If you are questioning the meaning of the title of this paper "Panama Studies," a "panama" is a Hungarian colloquialism meaning swindle, racket, fraud or deception. In addition, "The Prince of Máramaros" is Baron Hermann Groedel.

This paper is the second in a series of two pamphlets written by Arpád Zigány (1865 – 1936) focused on corruption in the Hungarian timber industry and partners in government. Along with many other papers, Zigány wrote an anti-Habsburg brochure in 1905 under the pseudonym "Professor Zeisig," which landed him in prison for several months.

The document's first paragraph mentions the first volume (pamphlet) in the series. I could not locate a copy of that document at the time of this writing (September 2023).

A note from Kathy Lonyay about her section:

"A few repetitious parts and plays on words that did not lend themselves to translation I combined or left out. Here and there I used a little license. The flavor of the writing is fairly intact. Notes in brackets [ ] are mine."

Words and key people:

- Föispán – unique to Magyarország (Hungarian). A high office, head of the megye (county). Perhaps very remotely like a state governor
- Alispán – also unique to Magyarország. The lieutenant of the föispán, but actually is the more powerful of the two.
- Erdély: Hungarian for "Transylvania." In pre-Trianon (WWI) Europe, Transylvania was part of Hungary
- Szekely: A subgroup of the Hungarian people living mostly in the Székely Land in Romania. Formerly Hungary
- Dénes Sebess: Lawyer; in 1901 he became a Member of Parliament and was re-elected in 1905 and 1906. In 1906 he became a panel judge and head of the land registry department of the Ministry of Justice.
- Dezsö Polónyi: Politician, lawyer, son of Géza. Doctorate in law in 1905. In 1906 took over his father's law office. As a lawyer, he mainly participated in politically related lawsuits, and was the defense counsel of István Friedrich in the Tisza lawsuit.
- Geza Polonyi: Géza Polónyi was a Hungarian politician and jurist, who served as Minister of Justice between 1906 and 1907. He was a major politician of the Independence Party.
- Móric Horn: Director of the Groedel's Transylvania Forest Industry Joint Stock Company in Kommando, and son of David Horn, the previous property owner. Móric was the Groedel's "fixer" in Kommando, performing their dirty work with or without their knowledge and approval.

PANAMA STUDIES

SECOND IN THE SERIES

The Prince of Máramaros

Written by Árpád Zigány
(writer and journalist)

"My word is no word."
-Baron Hermann Groedel von Gyulafalva

Manuscript
August 1906

"The tone of this pamphlet is unusually sharp and harsh, because its purpose is to provoke the press. The company Groedel Brothers, which used to be the treasury, and has been plundering the Székely people for years, not only boasts that it is not afraid of the press and can silence it at any time, but also openly proclaims that it is free to do anything, despite the laws. Since in this case it is not only a question of the public interest, but also of the violation of the sanctioned laws, I believe that the patriotic Hungarian press, regardless of party affiliation, will publish the details of this pamphlet that are suitable for forcing this shameless pocket-cancer company into the path of legal retribution."

Introduction

The last chapter of my pamphlet, Panama Studies (in which I began to air the corrupt practices of the Baron Groedel Company) that was published on June 20th of the current year [1906], ended thus:

"This illustrious baron has another nice trick too, which he perpetrated with the forests of Gyergyószentmiklós. The afore-mentioned Götz Company, during an acquisition of Rumanian forests, scalded the Groedel Company and snatched from under its nose a valuable forest, but legitimately, by merely offering and paying more for it. But, the "prince of Máramaros" did not swallow

this so easily and vowed revenge. The opportunity for this presented itself at the Gyergyószentmiklós forest auction. The owners [several] would have gladly sold the forest for 300 crowns per hold [Magyar acre], but the Götz company promised 420 crowns per hold. The contract was drawn up on these terms and when it was ready, in stepped Groedel who swore that the Götz Company would never set foot in Csik County ["county" is not a suitable word for megye, but lacking a better one, it will have to do] no matter how much it would cost him. At the last moment, he sent his director, Móric Horn to Gyergyószentmiklós, got the people drunk, and bribed them by promising 450 crowns per hold, not by contract, but by seeking an option. He asked for it for a month and in case of non-use of the option, he promised a mere 20,000 crowns for it!

Anyone who knows what conditions are involved in the creation of such an option between large businesses would certainly be surprised. He would be even more surprised to find out that Baron Hermann Groedel publicly announced that he has absolutely no need for the Gyergyószentmiklós forest and with this option he just wanted to prevent his competitor, the Götz Company, from ever setting foot in Erdély. And it may easily happen just so, because this company which produces 22,000 wagons of wood and has been used to honest competition on the international market is hardly going to get mixed up with the likes of the Groedel, Herzberg, Pallós, Loósy and Hugmayer, and Steinherz Companies, knowing that they work with more or less dishonest methods, which *it* is not knowledgeable in using. The above-mentioned option expires this year on July 3rd and then we shall see if the Groedel Company takes over the Gyergyószentmiklós forest or not. We also will delay until then our second series of these Panama Studies in which we will air the corrupt practices of these companies.

The previously mentioned option expired on July 3 and as I had already written on June 20th, the Groedel Company did not act on the option and did not buy the Gyergyószentmiklós forest. This glaringly shows the politics of those baronized Prussian Jews. They act like the mastiff that lies in the hay and though he himself does not eat hay, he chases the cattle away from it as they try to come to eat.

Before the loss of the battle of Mohács, a few years after the death of the just Mátyás [King], the likewise Prussian-born Fuggers extorted this unfortunate country. They did so just as the Groedel brothers do now, with the help of the government. At the time, they formed an alliance with the Thurzó brothers,

then Counts of the Chamber, so they could usurp the mine monopoly. The Groedel brothers are satisfied with the Gábor Dániels, the Károly Hieronymis, the Albert Bedös, the Feilitzscheks, Vöröses, Polónyis, and then the Sebess-type monopoly canvassing lawyers also, because in their methods and people they are not one bit picky. If they reach their goal, to monopolize the lumber industry, they would even ally themselves with the lawyer of the brothels, the thieves of Graz too, even though they know that to hold discussions with them in private is dangerous. Géza or Dezsö Polónyi, Dénes Sebess or Móric Horn, all the same, money can buy every one of them to do anything. And there is money after 30 years of extortion, looting, and bullying by which this baronized, Prussian Jewish company grabbed up millions in the country.

But, let us go back to the forests of Gyegyószentmiklós. They were to be sold by the joint owners for about 2 million crowns, but the price offered was more than the owners had hoped for. The deal would have been concluded, the contract signed, if the Groedel Company had not intervened and ruined it all. I repeat, ruined it, because this company did not want to do business here, it did not want to compete with the bids of the other company. It just wanted to ruin the just-about-concluded deal so that the company would not be able to set foot into Csik County. It played in a cynical, vile manner with the interests of the owners. Because of its own selfish and dirty business interests, it was ready to snatch away hundreds and hundreds from those who had hoped to sell their forest for a reasonable, in fact, advantageous price. They did it by sending their secretary Móric Horn to Gyergyószentmiklós to ruin the deal at any cost. Horn was perfect for the dirty deed. He signed a secret contract with Vákár and partners, local forest owners, from whom he bought the rights to 1500 holds for 650 crowns under his own name and, in case of breach of contract, he stipulated a penalty of 20,000 crowns. Why on Horn's name and not the Groedel Company's? Because this way they would not be able to get even 5 cents from Horn, whereas they would be able to get it from the Groedel Company.

Horn has already breached the contract and has not fulfilled any of its conditions. Vákár and partners may sue Horn to try to get that 20,000, but for them to not get it is just as sure that the Groedel brothers are now proudly rubbing their hands together and laughing at the success of their latest dirty ploy and the grief of the poor cheated Székelys. And Dezsö Polónyi, whose father descends from a "poor, but old noble family", and trusting in his father's power,

will take care of the matter by ordering the judges to drop the case against Horn because that is what ***he wants***. His father is the minister of justice, now not so "poor, but still from an old noble family", and he is his son. To this, I as an old rusty-penned writer don't know what to say, but I recall the constructive lines of a Sándor Petöfi, also poor, but also not from an old noble family:

"The Noble"
They tie the villain to a whipping post,
Make him pay for his sins with beatings with sticks.
He stole, he robbed, and devil knows what else.

But, he shouts, resisting,
'Don't touch me! I'm a noble.
You have no right to beat a nobleman!'

Did you hear this? Did his ancestor's spirit disgrace us?
Now, we must not beat him,
We should hang him!"

Is this true Misters Sebess and Polónyi? For the time being however this is not about you, but the clients. However, as soon as I finish with them, you will be next, and then the government too.

Corruption and Servility

Even before Hermann Groedel was ever Gyulafalvi or baron, he was already cheating and stealing from the Máramaros treasury just as he is now cheating and stealing from the Székelys in Erdély. Once during a rather perilous scheme, when they were removing the treasury's mark from felled timber, an official he was using for the deed, anxiously stated that one could be jailed for this.

"But not in Magyarország [Hungary]," the then plebian Prussian answered with ironic arrogance, naturally in German.

In these three appallingly embarrassing and truthful words lays the secret to the Groedel Company's sudden and miraculous rise to fortune. These three words express the corruption that makes it possible for leaches, like the Groedels, to spread and to grow.

When the Fuggers[141] were finally caught for their cheating back in the 16th century, they were fined 100,000 Forints, but they kept sending in bills for 267,000 for damages and Lajos II [King] forgave the debt and recognized their rights! That was quite a bit of corruption for that time, but compared to today...the Groedels were not even convicted! In fact, they received the rank of nobility and then of baron! So, now they are "nobility," just as their lawyers are. But, as a matter of style, they should have written the patent[142] on the skin of the poor, innocent people, whom they managed to "skin" with the help of their old noble shyster lawyers, rather than on parchment. [In early times, nobility patents were originally written on animal skins because paper was hard to come by.]

These two "noble" families are like brothers, they complement each other in providing "joy" throughout the nation. The newly-noble Groedel ruins, skins the people wherever he sets foot. The old noble Polónyi refers the skinned to the Missler Company and protects the right of "free movement" for the unfortunate, who already have nowhere to go in their own homeland. And likewise, old and noble Dénes Sebess joins them as the third party, who was not in direct contact with the Groedel Company. He merely received instructions from Géza Polónyi (while he was still a lawyer) and from the Groedels' representative in Brassó...to assist him, and in his spare time, he [Sebess] was Károly Herzberg's lawyer.

And they entrusted this man to head the property redistribution in Erdély![143] This man, of whom I had written in my previous pamphlet, that he should in no way occupy this important office that concerns thousands of people's interests, because he either knew about the forest panamas in Erdély or he didn't. If he knew and did not speak up about it (and he certainly did not speak up) then he should not be in that position because he has no conscience and is untrustworthy. But, if he did not know about them, then he really does not belong there because such a fellow, not able to see, can not be the guardian of the vital interests of thousands and thousands.

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[141] *Fugger family, German mercantile and banking dynasty that dominated European business during the 15th and 16th centuries, developed capitalistic economic concepts, and influenced continental politics.*

[142] *A patent is the document confirming the person's or familiy's nobility – in this case, baron.*

[143] *Property distribution to the people in Romania occurred replacing serfdom.*

What can Darányi [minister of agriculture] do against these greedy jackals, which immediately begin to screech and shout if feeding time is late? He watches over the forests of oak and of pine with vigilant care for nothing. The Groedels, the Herzbergs, the Pallóses, the Loósys are coming and aided by the big-mouthed "guardians," they take the forests one by one away from the poor people, the owners, who have nothing else. In my previous pamphlet, I had aired the panamas of the acquisition of the forest of Gyergyóujfalu and had called for ministers Polónyi and Darányi to initiate an investigation and to nullify the contract on the basis that Herzberg, the Loósy Company's front man, had himself, or with help, forged a good number of signatures onto the contract. And what was the result? They named Herzberg's lawyer Dénes Sebess councilor at the level of appeals court judge at the ministry of justice, just to head the Erdély property redistribution matters. And the Loósy Company formed a stock company with 3,600,000 crowns capital for the exploitation of the forests of Gyergyóujfalu for which they paid the poor Székelys not quite 1,200,000 crowns!

Those cheating, conscience-less, parasitic profiteers, the Loósys, Herzbergs, and the Mártons, who sell even their own blood, took 2,400,000 crowns from the destitute, starving Székelys who have been forced to emigrate. And the forest of Gyergyóujfalu, the disgusting panama of which was aired in my previous pamphlet, which was acquired by the Pallós Company with Herzberg's mediation for 4,800,000 crowns is now being offered by the very same Herzberg for 7 million! So, again, a 2,200,000 crown profit, an illegal advantage, amassed by cheating at the expense of the poor Székelys. Is it a wonder then that the Székelys curse disgustedly? Is it surprising if on July 18th at the föispán's inaugural banquet, a scandal occurred because of this? Because when Ferenc Török, parliamentary representative, began criticizing these vile panamas in obscure statements and Lajos Márton tried to angrily defend himself, most of the gathering, including the föispán, left the entire band. Is it true that is why Herzberg partied until dawn and "paid for everything," but what consolation is it to the poor, fleeced people? After all, the exploited, defrauded, poor Székelys gained no benefit from those binges that Herzberg held at old Buda (likewise from their [Székelys'] money and at their expense) with Lászl Vörös, Károly Feilitzsch, Gábor Dániel, and other such "honorables" and stupid accomplices either.

But, Herzberg, Loósy, Márton, and Pállós are still only small-caliber. Most of the time they only bribe and influence the ignorant people so that they may be

able to buy their forest for a pittance, but they are always very careful to make the deal seem honorable. Furthermore, they do not steal, cheat, or bribe, they do not lie under oath, and they do not have others lie either, unlike the Groedel Company. In this pamphlet, I shall prove that it does all of these things shamelessly and boldly.

Service for the Public Good

A couple of weeks ago, Count Gyula Andrássy gave strict orders for the registry and audit of noble patents since, as was stated in the order, lately there have been numerous abuses of these documents and the illegal use of distinguishing names [such as "Gyulafalvi"]. Well, maybe there has been abuse, but would it be worthwhile to correct this, would it be at all worthwhile to protest the intrusion of social climbers into the aristocratic class when in this class there loom the likes of Baron Gyulafalvi Hermann Groedel? If the aristocracy cannot evict this individual from its bosom, then it can boldly endure even the card cheats of Bacchus' cellar elbowing their way into its midst, because the company of only these can be more shameful to aristocratic circles since one or another of them had been convicts, whereas Hermann Groedel has so far been able to avoid this penalty.

Once, during the time of the native kings, nobility was awarded to those who shed their blood in the service of the country and for the interests of the dynasty. Under the Habsburgs, the title of count and an abundance of property was awarded even for this or that peace treaty. Under Maria Theresia, ex-Huguenot Jesuit renegades became barons. Today everything is different. Today people receive baronships for amassing millions by the shedding of the blood of others and, in addition to the merciless exploitation of the poor people, they serve the interests of the dynasty only so far as donating hundreds of thousands for elections to the sitting party's coffers in exchange for a title. This is how the Groedels bought their baronial patent, also. With money coming from what kind of dirty source? We shall show that within the pages of this pamphlet.

The family received the baronship "for merits in the area of the Magyar lumber industry." And Máramarossziget named Baron Hermann Groedel, the family's "most outstanding member," honored citizen for the very same "merits." That is, not quite. He received the honor "in recognition for his merits in the city and county." And what kinds of merits might these have been? That

is what the newspaper "Pesti Hirlap" (number 257 of 1905) tries to carefully hint/pick at as follows:

"That someone used the Magyar National Railways to transport a great amount of lumber is not just yet an achievement, because there are others too who made use of the National Railways and paid shipping/transport fees for all of that wood. Neither is it a merit if someone is successful in contracting business with the government from which ***he*** earned millions ---and not the state. But, by today's standards, it surely is considered a merit that the new barons cannot even speak Magyar, not to mention that they are not even native-born. One gladly would become a citizen of a place where he feels good. Especially if the governments like him so much that one, Tisza's, makes him a "Gyulafalvi" noble, and the other, Fejérváry's, outdoes even Tisza's and makes him a baron, plus "Bogdánfalvi."

"But what are this family's merits? Because until now we had not heard its name mentioned in connection with any institutions, movements, and ventures, in relation to Magyar culture, community works, in fact, we had not even heard this name in connection with charitable works. To the contrary, we remember having heard this name in a bad light when not so long ago the courts were dealing with it."

The "Hazank" issue of 1905 number 222 recaps this "discreet" article, the meaning of which is to be found reading between the lines, by writing the following word for word:

"Three gentlemen of Máramaros County received a baronship. We do not know them, they may be entirely good people and conscientious patriots, even though they are not Magyar. This, however, is still not a reason for someone to receive a baronial honor. They acquired money and an abundance of property, they have a thriving business, but there are plenty of successful businessmen in Magyarország who are not barons. Why then must these gentlemen be honored as upper nobility when their achievements can only be recognized within a small circle of their acquaintances? To receive an answer about this is probably futile. Not long ago, these gentlemen were ennobled for an unknown reason. They had not taken part in Magyar public life, neither before nor afterward. Their name was unknown at cultural and philanthropic functions. Their name remains a foreign-sounding one. They did not esteem their home, which

has so readily provided them with money and prestige, enough to even learn its language. It was by such circumstances that the baronial coronet was just plopped onto their heads by the hand of an unconstitutional government. Hats off to the new worships all you respected gentlemen whose fathers and great grandfathers had sacrificed their minds, blood, and property for the homeland for centuries!

"They had been saying for a while now that baronships are to be gotten like plum jam on the stock exchange. In several instances, they knew the exact prices of these titles. Tisza did not even try to deny this embarrassing public belief. However, the reality is that a great amount of money has accumulated in the party fund coffers because they spent millions on the elections. Where did this money come from? It came about from the taxation of man's vanity. Lately they accomplished this business with incredible cynicism. Cynical was he who gave it [title], and also he who bought it. To give a reward for achievements in exchange for hate money, to buy with hate money that which should only be deserved for achievements. Even some of those who should not belong there had gotten into this embarrassing market. There are among the corrupt, real nobles, also. How do they feel in this company? How can the civil community, with such patience, put up with making a mockery of civil virtues by means of plutocratic arrogance? How can it take off its hat to such contemptible, cheap stuff? How can it endure the stuffing of party coffers in such a frivolous manner? And why are the old, titled nobles silent? Does the king know that they are using his princely right as vulgar business capital? Did they tell the king yet that with every esteemed stroke of his pen the governments are supporting the business of buying the old Magyars' consciences with the money of these new Magyars?"

There is an old saying that a dog can never become bacon and this saying has been proved to be true with the Groedel Company, also. This company, from the moment it set foot in Magyarország, began its "business" with fraudulent schemes and truly brought Máramaros County to the brink of economic ruin. Ten years before the above articles were published, the "Máramarosi Hirlap" (July, 10, 1894) was already attacking the Groedels with the following charge:

"Governments fall, föispáns and alispáns change. In other words, everything is subject to change and to end. Only the signs of improvement in Máramaros' economic situation is late in materializing and it is doubtful that these

improvements will ever occur. That is how certainly the Groedel Company's situation with its contractual ties with Magyar state forestry stands, on a solid foundation like Mt. Zion, monopolizing with but very few charitable deeds, stringing the world along, allowing itself the donation of some aid for parliamentary elections. In return, it is insatiable and holds Máramaros' economic situation in its hands, laughs to itself, collects millions at the state's expense with the ruination of hundreds and hundreds of businessmen and thousands and thousands of tax-paying families of the county.

"For 15 years this county's economic and financial situation is continuously in decline and if we look for the initial cause of this, we will find that it occurs in part because of the current contract between the forest treasury and the Groedel Company and in part because of the absence of oversight of the neglect to fulfill the conditions in the nullified contract.

But let us not get ahead of ourselves. Let us examine point by point how the millions were amassed, with which the intruding Prussian thieves were able to purchase a baronship.

The Treasury Lease and the Wood Thefts

The Groedel brothers, namely Hermann Groedel, Bernát Groedel, and Albert Groedel made their appearance in Máramaros 30 years ago as contractors of the treasury's forests and sawmilling works. Since at that time they only had enough money to pay the deposit and the down payment on the lease, they did not buy wood from private individuals. It is odd though that they sold more wood than they received on the treasury's account books. Since it is common knowledge that felled trees do not continue to grow in the forest, nor in the lumberyards, it is obvious that the Groedel brothers had stolen the surplus from the treasury.

The Groedel Company had its own employees at its landings [for floating timber in a waterway] at Körösmezö and Rahó who facilitated the thefts. For years, the receiving and delivery of timber happened thus: The treasury's delivery clerk would note the thickness and cubic volume of the wood delivered to the company, but he did not stamp this on the wood itself as he would have done if the company had been anyone other than the Groedel Company. It is true that at Bocskó one of the clerks was transferred for this reason. But, the investigation, locating responsibility, and reprisal should not have ended there. It

should have been noted from the company's sales accounts how much wood was stolen from the treasury.

Because the Groedel Brothers regularly stole wood from the treasury, they conspired with the treasury employees, bribed the forest wardens, even the higher-level employees if they could get to them. Just to mention one of the many incidents: On February 22, 1892, they paid 3,900 forints to Karády, former forest warden of Bogdán-luhi. Why and with what services to the Groedel Company did the treasury forest warden earn such a "horrendous amount of money" of 3,900? It is to be understood that forest wardens are poorly paid and earn about 15 to 20 forints a month and would not be able to earn such an amount from the treasury in 20 years. And that not "only" Karády was bribed by Groedel can be shown by the fact that several other treasury forest wardens, who were in contact with the company, left their jobs with the treasury possessing sizeable amounts of wealth. And with 15 to 20 forints a month, not only can one not accumulate wealth, but one cannot even make a living on that.

According to the contract dated December 4th, 1888 in Budapest, the Groedel Company was allowed to bring in 250,000 cubic meters of pine from Galicia over a ten-year period with the stipulation that within a single year, no more than 50,000 cubic meters may be brought in. And that the importation of this wood is only allowed after Máramaros had completed harvesting its wood.

This clause of the contract was not only harmful and detrimental to the state treasury, but also had an adverse effect on Máramaros County itself, - if you think about it, it should be absolutely clear that in this way the lumber from Máramaros had to compete with the cheaper and lower grade import, which decreased local logging, or rather hindered the greater development of the sector.

However, Albert Bedő stated that the State Treasury itself had a dam built in at the edge of the forest border in the Sztokovec-valley for 25,000 Ft, to facilitate the transportation of lumber from Galicia. Also, Albert Bedő and his underlings turned a blind eye on that the Groedel company imported not 50,000 but 200,000 cubic meters of lumber from Galicia to Máramaros, regardless of whether the log-running (transport on river rafts) of the Máramaros lumber was finished or not. This means that the domestic and import lumber were mixed and shipped together.

This was just the beginning of their timber theft on a colossal scale! The mixing of the domestic and import lumber made official control harder and more complicated, if not impossible. After the abuse mentioned above - the absence of the treasury markings on the logs from the County - had been stopped, the company was forced to sell the lumber taken from and marked by the Treasury with the same Treasury numbers. On the other hand, they had to mark the import lumber from Galicia with tar paint, so the origin of the logs could be identified and imports could be controlled accordingly.

However, since a possible rigorous investigation could have uncovered not only smuggling far beyond the contractual agreements, but also shameless theft of the treasury - the Groedel company sold these marked trees never with the same numbers, instead they crossed-out the markings to beyond recognition or changed them altogether. They did this to mix up the tar-marked imported logs from Galicia with the timber trees logged in Máramaros. They also took some of the latter and repainted them with tar. So, to fish in troubled waters, on one hand, they covered their theft with smuggling, on the other hand their smuggling with theft - and all these at the cost of the Treasury!

Tax evasion, breach of contract

The wealth of the Groedel company was growing year by year – writes the Máramarosi Hírlap (Máramaros Gazette) – to the same extent that the other timber merchants of the County went bankrupt, the people who had been making an honest living from the timber trade, who paid their taxes to the letter as loyal citizens, who were properly coined to employ thousands of day laborers. Máramaros County couldn't be described as poor then because the establishment of the light rail networks and the Groedel-contract, only later, deprived the people of this county of a decent living and from almost every possible source of income later. The Groedel company – before it was involved in the private timber trade – had paid 10-12,000 forints in taxes, but these days (in 1894), despite the general tax increase, they are paying less than half of that. So, the Groedel brother's taxes were reduced at the same proportion as their business and income grew.

After the aforementioned contract was made in 1888, the Groedel company declared 50,000 forints of income and paid 5000 forints III. class income tax accordingly. This was the most scandalous farce, the defrauding of the state

treasury, and this became only possible because the tax authorities were in cahoots with the company. The terms and conditions of the contract told that the company had received 418,450 cubic meters of thick lumber and 474,341 cubic meters of lumber of smaller sizes from the wood-treasury in 1891, 1892 and 1893. The pure profit on thick lumber was 2 forints per cubic meter, and they should have earned 150,000 forints at least on the small lumber. Even by the most modest calculations, their pure profit had to be 986,900 forints at least.

It's common knowledge that usually the financial authorities tax relentlessly, so it's remarkable how gently they deal with this company of millionaires and their major, legendary trades. After their valid contract with the treasury, they were taxed after 50,000 forints pure income, completely disregarding the 50,000 cubic meters of lumber the company had imported from Galicia. As we have written above, this item wasn't just 50,000 cubic meters per year, but 200,000. But let's suppose for the sake of argument that it was just 50,000, according to a minimal calculation the company had a minimal profit of 2 forints per cubic meters. But even if it was somewhat less, the company should have been taxed for this income from the timber trade. Because we shouldn't presume that the Groedel company imports pines from Galicia with a loss...?

And this is not the end of it. In the contract mentioned above, it is established that the Groedel company is required to process 150,000 cubic meters of pine to timber per year and to export it via a maritime port abroad. But the fulfillment of these conditions did not offer great profit for the company, and because – as one of the brothers himself boasted about it – even the minister Bethlen was in their pocket, the agriculture ministry granted them remission of fulfilling this requirement. So, also the Hungarian State Railways was deprived of a 70,000 forints charge, which would have been the cost of transportation of these 150,000 cubic meters of timber to the port of Fiume.

And this is still not the end of it. The contract provided that the company should continuously operate and maintain the sawmill leased from the treasury. The Groedel company simply ignored this clause by suspending every work in the mill for more than one and a half years, which caused tremendous loss to the inhabitants of Máramaros county.

Because of the mill stoppage at least 300 workers lost their jobs. This also denied them access to cheap slashes, the by-product of a working mill the poor-

er people used to heat their homes. And most importantly, if the inhabitants of the upper county needed timber for their own needs, they could purchase it only from neighboring Galicia at a high price. This is most important because it's well known that the houses in Máramaros county are made entirely from wood.

It wasn't the last dirty trick of the Groedel company either when they leased out the mess hall on their plant for 5,000 forints per year. The company committed to providing the employment of at least 300 workers on site. But after they had received a year's rent, the company just stopped all work in the mill, and the contractor was forced to go to court for his money. The conduct of the company was so shamelessly cynical that when the Minister of Agriculture visited the site, the company had restarted the mill for a day, made it look nice, and brought some workers over from a neighboring plant for a few hours. When the Minister left, they just sent the workers home. Hermann Groedel, this modern Potemkin, knows very well the ways of deceiving... And bribing. Is there any more disgusting example of servitude and conscience for sale than that there wasn't a single official in Máramaros who dared to tell that the mill wasn't actually operating, and this grab-all company restarted it only for a day to deceive the Minister!

This was how the greedy and bully company derailed the interest of an entire county for their own benefit. That's how the poor paid for – directly or indirectly – the extravagant lifestyle of this haughty and bloated family, their marvelous Byzantine castle. So did the state treasury feed and fatten these Prussian characters with all kinds of benefits who didn't appreciate the country they fried the fat out from enough to actually learn her language during their 30 years of pillage! And this notorious pickpocket of a company employed Géza Polónyi, the current Minister of Justice, as their lawyer. After Polónyi couldn't dine on this fine but loathsome table anymore, he passed the assignment to his son, whose office opens a revolving door straight to the Minister's reception!

Yuck! Such a rule of the nation! Will you seek a press lawsuit for that too?

Connivance, perjury

Shortly after the Groedels had gained a foothold in Máramaros county, a certain Ágoston Kiete, after committing multiple accounts of fraud and document falsification, escaped with a large amount of money from München, Bavaria. The Bavarian police were looking for the fugitive with great effort but in vain.

It was as if the land had swallowed him up as he was not heard about for several years, so the case was nearly forgotten.

But a few days after the mysterious disappearance of Ágoston Kiete, the Groedels had received a visitor. One of their "dear cousins" arrived – he called himself Antal Ulrich –who put up in their castle and made a permanent stay there. The arrival of this "dear relative" meant a great boost for the business of the Groedel brothers. Everything seemed to indicate that the "cousin" – whom they also employed in their business immediately – had brought significant capital with him, and he invested this capital into the Groedel business, which had teething problems at the time.

And business picked up soon indeed. The thousands, ten-thousands, and hundred-thousands kept flowing into the register of the Groedel brothers. Soon they didn't need the backer anymore, what more, the "dear cousin" had started to become a burden to them. They wanted to get rid of him, but in such a way that they didn't have to pay his share of profits the "dear relative" was reasonably expecting. It was his money after all that boosted the business and increased profits.

Poor Antal Ulrich didn't expect what was coming at him. He enjoyed his worry-free life in the castle of his "hospitable relatives." But one night, Ferenc Szőllősy, Máramarossziget Chief of Police appeared suddenly and arrested... Ágoston Kiete. Because he and Antal Ulrich were one and the same person, like Célestin and Floridor.

Mr. Kiete-Ulrich, the "dear relative", the "beloved cousin" was locked up immediately. He was tried and sentenced for many years in Bavaria. But no harm came to the Groedel brothers. Why? Everyone knew that they had been hosting this man, their "cousin" for years. If this man was their cousin, then they had to know that his name was not Ágoston Kiete but Antal Ulrich. But they were his partners in crime anyway because they took his money that he had gained unduly and in a criminal way. How come their conduct was not sanctioned in any way?

Because the then brains of this slippery "Hungarian baron" family, the infamous Zilzer clued Hermann Groedel up that - according to Bavarian criminal law – he as a star witness couldn't be touched if Hermann reported Antal Ulrich himself. And so, he did, because Ulrich had become a burden for him, and the

Groedels didn't need his money anymore. Rouge's honor, the mutual solidarity of even the lowest evildoers didn't come in the picture. It must have happened this way because none of Groedel brothers had to deal with any unpleasantness due to the case, even though it was them who had committed connivance, who had aided the escape and the hiding of a wanted fugitive – a criminal act every civilized state punishes severely.

This next despicable act was joined by another when Sámuel Jáhr, an inhabitant of Máramarossziget, sued – due to a business connection- the Groedel brothers for a claim of 54,000 forints. Mihály Schréter – then an inhabitant of Máramarossziget now resides in Szatmár – was the decisive key witness of this civil action. During his first testimony, Schréter bore witness in favor of Sámual Jáhr, then Schréter – only God knows why – had a change of heart, right after his numerous meetings with Hermann Groedel.

In his change of heart there was Hermann Groedel's promise. He persuaded Schréter to change his first testimony with the promise that if he won the suit, he would give one-third of the 54,000 forints subject of the suit to Schréter. Schréter indeed reappeared before the court and explained that his first testimony he had given in favor of "poor" Sámuel Jáhr" was false, but this time he would tell the truth. So, he gave a decisive testimony in favor of...the "millionaire" Groedel company. For this reason, Sámuel Jáhr lost the suit and all his fortune.

That Hermann Groedel indeed abetted to commit perjury, to completely plunder Sámuel Jáhr, numerous witnesses and facts prove that. First of all, on the 24th of July, 1906, Mihály Schréter himself stated this in the restaurant of the "Európa" inn in front of many witnesses. He also stated that - under certain conditions - he was willing to provide a written statement.

To write or not this statement, that was a matter of dispute in Schréter's family. A lawyer from Szatmár participated in the dispute, and he suggested not to write it. Furthermore, the youngest son of Mihály Schréter was in Budapest the day after, on the 25th of July. The son also admitted before witnesses that his father had been persuaded to perjury by Hermann Groedel. The boy sought out a lawyer in the "Szabadság" (Freedom) Cafe and asked him – indirectly - whether this crime was time-limited and if the old Schréter was still liable for it?

On the 26th of July, the boy met Krámer – a Groedel employee from the local office on Báthory street – and told him that his father wanted to give a written declaration about this perjury. Krámer answered him: *"You shouldn't do that. You would shoot yourself in the foot because you couldn't prove that he (Hermann Groedel) bribed you and got you to do perjury."* This was the meeting that took place in the "Szabadság" Cafe.

But there are additional proofs that Hermann Groedel indeed had committed this nefarious, despicable bribery, which ultimately beggared a decent man. Namely, Hermann Groedel and Mihály Schréter had a long history of partnership. For example, when Hermann Groedel arrived at Máramarossziget on his cart and sighted Schréter somewhere, he ran his hand down his brows or wiped them with his handkerchief. This was the sign that Schréter should seek him out because Hermann wished to talk with him.

Other proof that Mihály Schréter kept blackmailing Herman Groedel for his silence. And Hermann Groedel was so afraid of him and the rest of Schréter's family that he was trying to avoid them, almost hiding. It happened that he tried to escape in the coat of his own porter to escape them, but one of Schréter's sons cut his way, and Groedel ran up the stairs swearing.

He gave them money numerous times. But the official who had been assigned with the delivery always took a 1/4-1/8th cut as "travel expense." Mihály Schréter complained about this at Szatmár, on the occasion I mentioned earlier. Hermann Groedel gave promissory notes about these payments many times, but many times he didn't. Often his official paid the rent of Schréter, what more, it happened that the lenders of Schréter – by his alleged demand – seized some property of Hermann Groedel. Groedel wasn't protesting about the seizure, so he admitted that he owed Schréter!

In one case, Schréter's wife asked a larger sum from Hermann Groedel to help them out once and for all. Hermann Groedel replied that as long as Schréter lived, he would not give them too much money at one time because that's how he wished to maintain his grip around Schréter. However, if Schréter drowned himself in the Danube, he would happily pay 20,000 forints. At least that's how Mihály Schréter told the story at Szatmár in front of witnesses. So, here is the millionaire bastard who keeps his henchman on a short leash, who pays his cut by pennies, helps him out with money only when they are at the brink of star-

vation. But he won't pay much because he is afraid that he would lose his grip and Schréter would possibly betray him.

But enough of the Máramures dirt, otherwise we would run out of the pages of this pamphlet soon if we described all the rascalities committed in Máramaros in detail. We note here as much that the Groedel brothers sought neither protection against nor retribution in court for the specific charges presented here as well as in the Máramaros Gazette. Rather they tried to prevent the publication of the newspaper and its delivery to the subscribers by partially acquiring the printing house, and by bribing the postal services. When the Groedel brothers lashed out against the Máramaros Gazette, the editorial staff declared them as cheap scoundrels unless they refuted the charges in court. But the Groedel brothers never did.

This was the beginning of the end in Máramaros. The Groedels didn't care about their indignant reputation as "vile villain." After they had been banned from doing business with state companies in Máramaros – certainly not for the recognition of their activities in the timber trade and of public benefit – they moved on to Transylvania to squeeze the Székelys. They never brought court action against the Máramaros Gazette – certainly not because they didn't own the baron title yet [pre-1906], but because honor, shame and decency had vanished from their souls long time ago, if they ever had those values at all.

Am I wrong, Representative Dezső Polónyi, Sir? I'm sure you are aware. But if you aren't, let me offer a bet: ten-to-one that these pocket pickers of a baron won't go to court, albeit Géza Polónyi is the Minister of Justice. And you know why? Because the "dear daddy" doesn't call the shots in the courts, the independent jurors do! And these scoundrels won't impress the jurors even if the son of a minister in office represents them!

The nightmare of the Székely alps

Albeit we are convinced that Dénes Sebess – if he will be appointed – won't have any real part in the land consolidation in Transylvania, still we dedicate the following chapters to him because it might occur to him that his office was established not to represent the benefits of the wranglers but to eradicate their abuses and harassment. But these are just words cried in a wasteland, because as long as Dezső Polónyi is the lawyer of the Groedel brothers, the appointment

of Dénes Sebess – or of anyone else for that matter – is just as utterly useless against the racketeering like tits on a bull.

Even less so, because the part Déness Sebess took in the suit of Count Mikes versus Kaiser & Co – we will talk about that in detail later – excludes the slightest possibility that he would take the conceit out of the Groedels, ever! As the Radikális Újság (Radical Newspaper) wrote in the issue of 26th of July, 1906, that law and justice in Transylvania and especially in Háromszék county are in the hands of the Groedel's trusted patrons. *"The era of the Groedels has just started, - writes the newspaper – and the poor Székely people will be forced to migrate. Unless the same people who govern Hungary realize soon how dangerous the operation is of the Groedels to the landowners. Dénes Sebess, the patron of the Groedels, is completely incompatible with this position, which was created by the Minister of Justice – admittedly – to "reform the Transylvanian woodlands in favor of the landowners."*

But let's get back to the Groedel brothers. Their company - enriched by the millions made in Máramaros – did more harm to Transylvania than on the scene of their first pillage. Aware of their financial power, the company conducted its manipulations even more successfully and shamelessly than before. The key of their success was that they always found willing allies among influential public servants who shielded them against law and justice so they could stay on with their dodgy machinations with impunity.

Political systems and governments came and went, but we can always find the partisans and pillars of each administration on the payroll of the Groedels. Among the members of the directorate and the board are strong men like Pál Móricz, (the distinguished) Gábor Várady sr., László Vörös, Károly Hieronymi, Gábor Dániel, Arthur Feilitzsch, etc. The company picked its legal counselors from a highly influential crowd of Ödön Barta, Dénes Sebess, and Géza Polónyi.

That's how the company of the Groedel brothers built a parallel state, which owns such privileges - with unashamedly slapping the law in the face - that even sovereign emperors in the modern rule-of-law states do not. That's why the "Egyetértés" (Unity) called the company as *"The nightmare of the Székely alps" (08.12.1903). The newspaper wrote: "Since the Groedels gained a foothold in Háromszék County, they ruin every business smaller than theirs."*

Their method is simple. Most forests are owned by numerous people. The ownership is not organized, and according to Austrian law still in effect in Székely Land every member owns a proportional part of each tree. In other words, even if someone owns 999 of 1000 proportion parts of a forest, he cannot break a twig unless the owner of the remaining 1 part approves. Eligibility is judged by the land registry. If a competitor of the Groedels cannot register his logging concession fast enough, the company buys the ownership of the soil from a minor beneficial for a high price and registers it under the name of one of their employees. To make things more certain, they deed the ownership to another employee if they have too. Then, this "sincere" third-person blocks the logging with an official prohibition, a writ of sequestration when the small contractor established a lumber yard and started working.

Timber theft in Zabola and elsewhere

The wolf changed its fur, but not its nature and the Groedels resumed their conduct in Háromszék County where they had left off in Máramaros. There they acquired – with their usual finesse - the lumber mill in Papolc that had been established by the infamous Dávid Horn, and which had come to be held by the Morpurgo investment company from Trieste. The Groedel's first business was that they bought the spruces with thickness over 40 cm on the Zabola communal alps. According to the official takeover and witnesses, there were more than 50,000 spruces with such thickness on the alps and about the same number of thinner specimens. This is rounded to 100,000 spruces, but they logged them all, nothing is left, although the record of delivery shows about only 36,000 logs taken over by the Groedel company.

Where are the rest of the trees?

The local parishes state that the company took them illegally (in other words: stole them). The company argues that somehow the rest of the trees had been approved for logging without the knowledge of the municipal judges and the entitled forest officer.

The Royal Tribunal of Kézdivásárhely ordered a site inspection and called for witnesses on the Lakóca alps, Zabola parish. Under the leadership of a magistrate, two chief foresters, an army of witnesses, the interested parties, and their lawyers established that despite the signed contract the Groedel company had devastated the alps owned by Páva and Zabola parishes. They cut trees they hadn't paid for,

thus caused tremendous damage to the parishes. It was entrusted to a forest officer to establish and estimate the amount, value, and kind of the stolen logs. To make the expert assessment of the damages - from the theft that had been identified without ambiguity – impossible, the company stamped the unapproved logs with a fake marking hatchet. They destroyed the stamps on approved but not yet logged trees. Their effort to muddle up things was only partially successful because they couldn't confute the theft, which remained undeniable.

The Groedel company stole a significant number of logs from the forest of Zágon parish as well. Although the court didn't establish the crime itself – only God knows in what kind of naive spirit – yet the company was obligated (court order 1888/905) to compensate for the illegally logged trees.

The following two cases shed light on the recklessness of these baronized thieves better: The Groedel company simply logged and stole 3407 trees from a virgin forest called Murdán, which was the property of Count Ármin Mikes. What more, they took 1600 logs that had been cut down by Count Ármin Mikes for his own timber business. The criminal complaint, the sequestration, and the gendarme protections were all useless against this actus majoris potentiae [actions of a greater power] because these evil scoundrels didn't give a damn about the law. Count Mikes filed for a civil claim and criminal action at the same time. The Groedel company deflected responsibility that they paid for the logged trees in accordance with the civil law. Despite they didn't provide any proof for that claim, the royal prosecutor dropped the charges and ceased further investigation on the grounds that "We cannot presume that a millionaire would steal a few thousand pines!"

Such nonsense can happen only in Hungary. Well-well, Hermann Groedel was right when he replied to his worrisome clerk with an imperious tone that one might get jailed for certain crimes elsewhere, but not in Hungary! The punchline and sad moral of the story that the civil procedure found that the reference of the Groedel company to civil acquisition was groundless, and the final judgment no. 6773/903 obliged them to compensate for the stolen lumber.

The other case is outrageous. Mrs. Bogdán Bányai, widow, and Kristóf Bányai had a forest called Manyiskanyak, in Covászna County. They wanted to sell it to a serious customer. This forest lies near the sawmill of the Groedels, and they really wanted it, but not for the price the Bányais wanted. So, the Bányais were

reluctant to negotiate, but the company – before anyone suspected or recognized it – suddenly logged 17,000 cubic meters of spruce, and in spite of the owner's protest, the Groedels had all the lumber carried away from their forest.

What is this if not plain robbery? What is this if not the renewal of medieval pillaging and the club law, which render the economically weaker vulnerable to the stronger? If we release a pike fish between the carp, in time, it will eat them all. Just like Hermann Groedel is devouring entire Transylvania slowly, unless someone gets him on hook and makes him harmless.

These newcomer barons take no responsibility, and they are defending themselves by saying that they don't know anything about the abuses. Móric Horn, the chief executive of the company took all the blame, but Horn pleads that he did acquire the logged trees from the Bányais. No forest map and contract signed by him confirm this statement.

The Bányais filed criminal charges against the robber baron Groedel company, but it's questionable if it will have any consequences. The naive approach of the prosecution to the thief millionaires hasn't changed it a bit, and it's likely this reckless thievery - a subject of public scandal and outrage – will remain unpunished. The owners might hope for a modest compensation after their stolen fortune, after a lengthy and costly suit. The unashamed thief reaches his goal because he receives a payoff without investment for a long-term loan (the repayment period: as long as the suit lasts). He acquires things that would have never been sold to him otherwise.

Smuggling, counterfeiting, looting

The same scam they had pulled off in Máramaros with the imported lumber from Galicia, the Groedels tried that again in Transylvania, but they were caught here because the inspection was stricter.

It happened a few years ago that the Groedel company contracted the Hungarian state railways for the delivery of a larger number of beech-wood ties. It's the law that these railroad ties must be made locally and of materials of domestic origin. Yet the Groedel company broke this law by having them made in Romania. They smuggled these ties and delivered them later. But when the state railroad company realized the ruse, they terminated the contract, therefore, the Groedels was added to their list of unreliable companies.

Zabola and other parishes from the Orbai District submitted a lengthy memo to the Lord-Lieutenant (shireman) of Háromszék County in which they complained that the Groedel company was smuggling a large amount of foodstuff liable to import duty from Romania. The company needed this because they supplied their own employees with it. The miserable workers had to buy their food from the company warehouses otherwise they got fired. But these in-house prices were so high that everyday subsistence devoured their entire pay. To make matters worse, this food was unhealthy and of poor quality. The health officer of the district, Dávid Zentai, whose duties were the inspection of storage, of the "social stores" and the prevention of practices hazardous to health, received regular payment from the company and turned a blind eye – for a bag of flour! – when he was appointed to investigate the complaints. He found everything all right, of course.

The Groedels attempted – according to the aforementioned memo, with success – to smuggle timber as well from Romania to Transylvania. Their method was the same that had been working exceedingly well with the Galician timber in Máramaros. The Groedels also own logging concessions and sawmills in Romania. Now, the company transports as much Romanian timber back to the country of origin as they want. Their goal is to muddle up the origin of the timber, so nobody can tell at any given point which country the timber is from. This fishing in troubled waters benefits only the Groedels, of course.

The Groedel company utilized another experience they gained in Máramaros earlier, the fake markings on trees. They employed this practice on the Lakóca alps and in the Murdán forest as well. They fake-marked the to-be-stolen trees as if the parish handed them over for logging. They did the same in the Murdán to pluck the forest of Count Mikes, so the trees looked like they belonged to Lakóca parish instead, under the pretense that the latter had approved the logging of this area as well.

It wasn't their last infernal move either how they acquired the common forests of Zágon village. 16,000 acres of spruce had been divided proportionally among the landowners of Zágon, which meant more than 1 million cubic meters of first-class timber to log. The private railroad of the Groedels crosses this area and one of their sawmills is also nearby, so the company wanted this forest really bad. But getting it wasn't an easy task. The landowners agreed that they would sell the entire forest in one piece, so they signed on for a partnership in

which there was a clause that no one shall sell or encumber his share alone. But since their respective ownerships were not registered yet, this arrangement of theirs could not be introduced in the Land Register.

The Groedel company drove a hard bargain for the forest, but the price they offered was less than half the partners liked. Meanwhile, the landowners decided on a meeting to sell the logging concession to Sándor Popper's company in Vienna for 1,800,000 crowns. They also leased the pasture for 20 years for a yearly price of 4000 crowns. The Groedel company, to get pre-emption rights, exploited the poor financial situation of one of the landowners, Janka Bartha, who wished to marry a military officer, but she couldn't provide the dowery. The Groedels drew Janka into issuing a promissory note in krone for one of their officials. They have this note contested by a lawyer from Brassó. This distant court ordered a compulsory execution for the debt. Then the Groedels had the forest seized as personal property(!), and bought it by auction, before any other partners of Bartha suspected anything!

Since Janka Bartha was in desperation, she agreed with the Groedels to remain silent, and the sale came to the notice of the rest of the concerned only after it had become final. The belated plea of the partners was ignored, albeit the court determined the buying procedure as illegal.

The consequence of this tricky and disingenuous move was that the landowners of Zágon were forced to terminate their joint contract with Popper and to give it over to the Groedel company at a much lower price. They had to because they couldn't give the logging concession to Popper anymore, and neither the Groedel company was willing to share the forest under any circumstances, nor they wished to sell Bartha's part to Popper.

Where were Dénes Sebess and Géza Polónyi when this outrage at the expense of the Zágon landowners happened? Did they know about it and if they did, did they speak out in favor of the robbed decent men? How could they stay silent and tolerate wordlessly that the Groedel company wronged the landowners of Zágon of one million crowns at least with this insidious trap? One-million crowns because the landowners had to pay a 300,000 crowns compensation for their withdrawal from the joint contract to the Popper company. What more, in addition to the pine forest, the landowners had to hand over 16,000 acres of beech to the Groedels for the price they had bargained with Popper earlier!

Such outrage and profanation of the rule of law, which is unheard anywhere else outside Hungary!

The Cableway of Count Mikes

With a corrupted state and enforcement behind them, the Groedels have to stick at nothing. A stunning proof for this is the following case: in 1903, Count Ármin Mikes received storing permission for a forest he had bought in Romania. To log the forest, he had a cableway built with the Kaiser & Co. from Kassel for a half million crowns. To stop Mikes' plans, the Groedel had multiple complaints filed by several shady characters stating that they owned certain parts of the forest for which Count Mikes had received storing permission. The Groedel's large influence in Romania proved to be decisive in the suspension of the permission.

With the news of the suspension in local papers, the Groedel company deceived the gullible contractors from Kassel to slow down the work, saying that Count Mikes didn't have any timber to transport anyhow, and sooner or later he would be forced to withdraw from the building contract and would have to pay compensation even without any further work.

The contractors from Kassel believed the Groedels, and they finished the cableway – in spite of the repeated urging not to - with a half-year delay when they saw that Count Mikes had already 46,000 cubic meters of logs lying around the station.

Because the delay caused damages amounting to thousands, Count Mikes sued Kaiser & Co. And who else came to the relief of the latter? The Groedels of course! They provided their lawyers at the disposal of Kaiser & Co, and mobilized their high political connections - Géza Polónyi and Dénes Sebess, once lawyers of theirs- to "gently" pressure the court. Kaiser & Co. is being represented by Dezső Polónyi, the son of the Minister of Justice, and by another lawyer of the Groedels. They feel so powerful that they don't even bother with the facade anymore. Like brigands armed to the teeth between the weaponless folk, they run everybody's life who opposes them or hurts their interests.

"*It's just wonderful* – fulminates the columnist of the "Radical Newspaper" in the 23rd of July issue – *the lawyer son of the Justice Minister is practicing in the same electoral district where his father won his mandate and is representing the*

same clients whose cases the father had been working with before! If this isn't a conflict of interest, I don't know what it is!"

To discredit the witnesses of Count Mikes in the lawsuit, Kaiser & Co, or rather the Groedels, launched the most nonsensical smear campaign. At first, The Crown Prosecutor of Kézdivásárhely rejected the charges as unsuitable for a criminal proceeding. Sebess intervened, and the General Office of Marosvásárhely ordered an investigation. Now that Dezső Polónyi is representing Kaiser & Co (and the Groedels behind them), they have every reason to trust in a favorable outcome.

They implicate that the Count's employees and witnesses created a fake trial balance from the Count's books, although not a single trial balance has been attached to the documentation of the civil suit. They also imply that the Count's people misappropriated building materials to prevent Kaiser & Co fulfilling their contractual obligations, although the materials in question were the property of the Count, misappropriation is excluded from the possibilities by definition! One nonsense is followed by another in the citation. Yet, it occurs neither Dénes Sebess – the supposed guardian of law and order in Transylvania – nor the son of the Justice Minister, the lawyer of Kaiser & Co that the creation of baseless submissions is incompatible with ethical lawyering.

How the entire proceeding breaches legal integrity is underlined by the fact that the complaint was supported by statements of witnesses coming from faraway places, who had been summoned in Brassó by the notary public. These "witnesses" were taken to Csíkszereda to make their statements before the county court first, but the justice there was decent enough to deny their hearing. Is there anything to add to this egregious procedure? Now as it stands, The Tribunal of Kézdivásárhely accepted the citation, but Groedels are still making efforts to reassign the proceeding to Brasso where Sebess is roaming free. They want to fake evidence there, behind the back of Count Mikes. Fortunately, the employees of Count Mikes became aware of the witness move and tried to probe it through the Gendarme and the parish prefecture. To withhold the information and protect their plan, Sebess intervened with the most nonsensical complaints against the Gendarme and the prefecture.

The game has been on for months, and the prosecution and the trial justice haven't heard the complaints yet. The complaint targeted the Count's most

honorable and tried officials, but they haven't been heard yet, so they had to endure the smearing of their names. With his firm stand the account books were returned to the Count. But what an unheard outrage is that the office of a nation-wide honored and acknowledged man is invaded and his account books are taken away? And all this is based on a lashed-together citation of such shady characters whose presence wouldn't be tolerated by any other decent country in the world.

And what circumstances this outrageous procedure are being carried out under? Albeit the seat of the court is in Kézdivásárhely, and one can find plenty of auditors there and in Sepsiszentgörgy, still, the experts were summoned from Brasso instead, and the books were taken there. Why? Because the Groedel company is Brasso-based, and they can wield their influence on the auditors there easier, they can even look into the books themselves. They can have a unique insight into the entire empire of the Count this way, the land he bought, and the prices he paid for them, the production rates, his business connections, everything!

Can we call this a rule of law where all this can happen?

When Kaiser & Co shut down the operation of the cableway for no reason, it caused tremendous damage to Count Mikes, whereby the court ordered work on the cableway to stop at the county's request, with the plant resuming operation under the control of a receiver.

Then Géza Polónyi – who was the lawyer of the Groedels and Kaiser & Co before be became minister – intervened personally in Marosvásárhely, and together with Sebess he achieved that the royal court there lifted the sequestration. So, Mikes – albeit he wasn't obligated to do so – had to buy off the entire track for 219,000 crowns and 75 fillérs. Now that Géza Polónyi has become a minister, and he has appointed his ally Dénes Sebess as the de-facto justice governor of Transylvania, Sebess gave up the case in question, but only to hand it over to Dezső Polónyi, the son of the Justice Minister.

We asked the question above whether we can call this a rule of law? Our sincere apologies for our naivety. We know this is the so-called "rule of the Nation", which means - according to the ruling party - that the state takes the hide of the taxpayers with a tricolor-hilted pocket knife! They paint the steamers of the Norddeutscher Lloyd to red-and-white-and-green, while the panamists

- the "faiseurs" Zoltán Lengyel dares to mention but not to name - are frenzy-feeding over a tulip-pattern table-cloth. Justice is served like deep-pocket clients are served in a whorehouse. *"Credat Judaeus Apella! - Apella, the Jew would believe it, not me"* – would say the old Horatius, if he was still alive.

Ruined timber merchants

History recorded of the Huns, that where the shoes of their horses touched the soil, grass stopped growing there for good. This is how Groedel ravages the land, they bring devastation, impoverishment, and desperation wherever they set foot. Their drive for an aggressive, soulless monopolization is killing the prosperous sale of woodlands and the timber trade in general in Transylvania as it did in Máramaros. Since the infamous general Basta, there weren't such ruthless and greedy leeches living on the necks of the Transylvanians like this company that wrecked and bankrupted an army of people working in the timber business.

They laid their hands on the flourishing timber trade of Barabás Bajkó with the most infernal cunning. Bajkó borrowed 40,000 forints as working capital for business purposes from the Bank of Transylvania. He covered this loan by multiple promissory notes issued by numerous prominent citizens among his villagers. He paid for the account, but the bank failed and he didn't get the notes back. The Groedels got hold of the notes, and they wanted to auction half of the village! To help his countrymen, Bajkó was forced to assign all of his forest-purchases to the Groedel company.

The Groedel company destroyed János Dávid by preventing him from exploiting his purchased forest. Dávid acquired the proper permit to lumber his property, but he – being trusting – didn't register it. Then the Groedel company – following the method we described in the section "Nightmare of the Székely Alps" – bought a minor portion of the forest with the soil below it for its treasurer, Benő Máhrer, and they have his possessory rights properly registered. They had been waiting until Dávid had a sawmill built at high cost and the logging started, then under the registered possessory rights they had the entire forest and the lumber sequestered. All work stopped in the mill, of course, and Dávid, whose business was running mostly on credit, became insolvent and lost his entire fortune.

One of János Dávid's creditors, István Fogolyán, took over the mill and logging rights in order to save something, but he had to pay so much to the Groed-

el company for lifting the impoundment and this haggling took so much time that his business was no longer viable. Count Mikes took over this very same enterprise when Kaiser & Co – prompted by the Groedels - didn't build the cableway for him in time. He took it nevertheless to supply his own steam mill - for a half-capacity run - with the 50,000 cubic meters of lumber logged by Dávid and Fogolyán.

But the Groedels – despite that they had no claim in that forest anymore – revived the impoundment, which had been lifted when they had come to terms with Fogolyán three years earlier, and with the aid of law enforcement they were balking at his logging plans for months, so the Count could not use the forest for the time he needed it he most.

When the Count didn't yield, they prompted their otherwise completely broke puppet, Kristóf Fogolyán, to sue Count Mikes for damages on the pretext that the Count allegedly had logged narrow trees in the forest that hadn't been sold to him. It's telltale that even his brother-in-law did not take on the suit on such a baseless and farfetched excuse. To bring action against Mikes, Groedel supplied Fogolyán with money and a lawyer. The value of the lumber at issue could be some 1000-1500 crowns, but the damage assessment alone cost 5000 crowns. The officials told this to Fogolyán, but he stubbornly demanded the assessment. It is well-known that Fogolyán is in serious financial condition – thanks to the Groedels – and he is at the brink of insolvency, so it's obvious that the Groedel company covered the cost of the assessment.

Ignác Diósi's son Lajos, purchased a forest of approximately 400,000 cubic meters of pine in the immediate neighborhood of the Groedel brothers. To prevent him from capitalizing on it, the Groedels brought three suits against him. The lawsuits dragged on for years, but the Supreme Court eventually sided with Diósi. Meanwhile, Diósi would have been willing to hand over the forest to the Groedels without any profit of its own, but those greedy bastard Prussians offered less than half-price. After finally winning the lawsuit, Diósi started to build a mill and private railway. The Groedels tried their hardest to prevent his operation; to encumber the acquiring of the necessary land for the railroad they incited the residents, bribed them, and equipped the most loud-mouthed with lawyers. Their seasoned director, Móric Horn bought parcels at horrific prices from people who had – unregistered - leasing agreements with Diósi before, so they could be terminated. Horn even bought the parcels where Diósi

had built his expensive and exemplary sawmill, so Diósi had to stop the work. Now the Groedels are boasting that they will bankrupt Diósi, and the forest and all the equipment will be theirs at a rock bottom price!

The Groedel brothers also ruined Ede Grosz. They denied him a road that was indispensable for his business. That's how they harassed József Brammer as well into bankruptcy: they blocked the road on which he could have his timber hauled from his forest. They use every unfair and insidious means at their disposal to hinder the business of Count Mikes, Popper, the Union, and the Hungarian Forest Industry Inc. The Groedels don't miss a chance to play them up! We already mentioned their lawsuits and harassment against Count Mikes, but these stories are just a fraction of the schemes with which they are trying to cripple the Count's timber trade.

The Hungarian Forest Industry Inc. operates in an entirely different area than the Groedel company. Yet a few months ago the Groedel brothers had hiked the price of a forest that was indispensable for Hungarian Forest so much that the general understanding is that the company had to lose money on the deal. The Groedels drove away Union and Popper – who are doing business in Csik County – in such a way that they paid excessive prices for certain small parcels of jointly owned forests, which was pushing up the prices on such a scale that it wasn't worth dealing with those forests anymore. Therefore, Popper retired from the trade, and Union is still feeling the consequences of these machinations.

That's how the Groedel company are extorting their monopoly in the timber trade, and they have such associates in high places on their payroll like Géza Polónyi or Dénes Sebess. This company has a great nose for the sources of power, and they are always seeking its protective shield. It's true that neither Polónyi sr. nor Sebess are lawyers anymore, but Polónyi's office has been taken over by his son, and the practice of Sebess belongs to his own brother now. We saw from their hunt for Mikes that the son of the Justice Minister represents not just the "forest king" but the allies of the latter as well. The son of the "Hungarian" Minister of Justice represents the foreign crooks against Hungarian nobleman with splendid and ancient family names, names that are forever linked with Prince Rákóczi and the Hungarian wars of independence. Or maybe that's Polónyi's motive? Maybe they are fanatic Habsburg loyalists and the great name of the Mikes irritates them so much that they are hell-bent

for despoiling the descendants of the Prince's most loyal followers, for some upstart naturalized Prussian industrialists?

Tax evasion, worker exploitation

It wouldn't be the Groedels if they had to do with the plundering they are practicing with the aid of their large bankrollers at the expense of citizens without protection. However, they enjoy the undeserved profit, as much they hate if someone – entitled or not – runs their fingers in their pockets. So, the Groedels are practicing the tried-and-tested methods of tax evasion in Transylvania as well, albeit much more shamelessly than they had been doing in Máramaros. According to the public balance sheets of the Budapest Commercial Court (as registry court), Transylvanian Forest Industry Inc. – that's the name the Groedel brothers are running their business with – is operating with 5,784,000 crowns share capital and produces 200,000 cubic meters of timber per year.

We have illustrated in detail the means and the bargains the Groedels obtain for the raw material for their plant. We can just imagine their enormous profits. But even if they bought their forests for decent prices and on a level playing field, their profits need to be at least 4-5 crowns per cubic meter because every expert knows that the timber prices have been rising sharply in recent years. Despite that, the balance sheets of the Groedel company show only a net income of 6-8,000 crowns, so they pay fewer taxes than a small-town grocer! They wrong the state and the parish of 100,000 crowns at least in income tax and rates, but of how much exactly, only an official investigation could tell.

The Groedels are big-time, smart fraudsters who are ripping off Romania just as with Hungary with devilish cunning. Since they have forests in Romania too, they buy the raw materials from their own forests for the mill in Hungary. The prices are so high on the invoices that the mill in Hungary doesn't make – on paper –any profit. To hide their profits in Romania, the processed timber is re-sold to their mill in Romania almost at loss. This is how they kill two birds with one stone, how they are robbing the Hungarian and Romanian state by concealing the profit they are making with the mill in Hungary.

But Prime Minister Wekerle neither cares nor has time for this issue. To make up for the unpaid taxes of the Groedels and the Wenckheims he will raise – despite an existing provision to the contrary – the 3% tax on nursing to 5%, he will raise the tax of kerosene because from that – in his own words – great

results can be expected. "*The kerosene tax* – argues Wekerle – *affects the entire population equally.*" The PM lies purposefully because he knows from experience that when he arrives home, his butler turns on the electric lamp, and so do the middle-income citizens of the capital and of the larger country cities. Not to mention that many have access to gas lights, but kerosene lamps are still widely used in villages – meaning, by the poorest people. No one spoke for them in the Hungarian Parliament that instead of the kerosene tax, those thief Groedels should be checked and taxed properly. Then the "National Government" will have the money to pay the horrific price for leasing the governance of this hapless but profitable country from Vienna.

The outrageous heartlessness with which the Groedel company treats the workers is only possible because the corrupted and drudgery conditions of ours allow them so! The Groedels almost skin the workers by forcing them to buy their everyday necessities from the company warehouses at outrageous prices. There is actually a ministerial decree that forbids the use of vouchers for an entrepreneur, but who cares about that here in Covászna? The company supplies its 2-3000 workers with foodstuff, tobacco and alcohol. This business alone means at least 100,000 crowns income per year for them, tax-free at all times, of course. As we told before, the Groedels have a part of this foodstuff smuggled from Romania. Just as we pointed out above how the health officer finds everything in order in these warehouses for a bag of flour...

The much more scandalous issue is that there are not enough precautions to ensure sufficient safety measures for the workers. Fatal accidents are almost commonplace in the Groedel works in Covászna County, what more, mass deaths have occurred several times. Criminal punishment doesn't follow these cases because the company always deflects responsibility to the victim by false pretenses and evades workers claims for compensation. The disabled, crippled, or orphaned family rarely receives any compensation and if they do, it takes years because the Groedel company always goes through with the lawsuits, which distress and tire the families so much that they settle for the most modest sum at last because it's more than nothing.

The Groedels are managing the social and accident insurance treasury like loan sharks. They are playing a true broker game: they collect the high social treasury funds from the workers mercilessly, but if those get sick or injured, they won't get the proper aid because no one checks their employer's stewardship.

Even the famous working-class newspaper, the "Népszava" (The People's Voice) – and that's a just cause they could well stand up for – doesn't look into this outrageous slavery for which this pamphlet is too brief for the stunning details. Because of these grievances the Transylvanian newspaper Epoca called the Groedel brothers "gangsters." This Székely newspaper predicted that sooner or later there should come a Mihály Nyuli in Covászna County who would treat the Groedels according to their merits...But enough of these dirtbags.

Conclusion

- *I'm suffering from a terrible weakness* - complaints the housewife to her doctor.

The doctor inspects the full-blooded, young, and strong woman and shakes his head: - *My dove, you are completely fine. Your health is splendid and seven times stronger than your husband's.*

- *Oh, I'm not suffering from a weakness of my own* - groans the woman - but *of my husband's.*

That woman, just like our nation, is young and powerful, but she is suffering from the weakness of the "national rule". Because the super-ministry is weak and fallible, and the so-called new system is recognized for a whole series of crimes and rascalities. They are committing the very same crimes with fury they had been protesting against when in opposition. That zeal ended when they got their hands in the till!

In times of Walpole, the House of Commons consisted of such dubious characters that one had to govern through corruption or to write substantive governance off altogether. But the minister did want to govern, so he made the deals and endured the looting of public property because that was the only way to act.

"*That is the only way*" – Minister Darányi was speaking with the same fatalistic tone when the issue was the ratification of a forest sale in Gyergyóalfalu, a contract forced by trickery and deceit, of which was signed by his predecessor seated by a failed administration, a day before he entered office. And Darányi approves this contract "*of necessity*". This phrase summarizes all the shame of the national rule, a death sentence for their legitimacy.

The knights of the "National rule" argue that although their rule can't bring national accomplishments, economic independence, they can't even promise universal suffrage. But they would drain the swamp, cleanse public life from the parasites, weed out the corruption and the racketeering with fire and sword. Instead, they have done nothing else this far than feeding, in the name of regime change. And they are gorging with the frenzy of starved predators escaping from a zoo. The declining gentry and social climber Jews pursue every piece of meat, and their endless appetite consumes every national effort for purity - meanwhile, they are eating up our future!

Since the big men make the decisions in the halls of the National Casino, and now we have to satiate the hunger of the Party of Independence, the government does nothing but usurp the idea of the nation, and their shameless throwing of red meat warns this bamboozled nation that patience is the virtue of donkeys. Wishes of high urgency and importance meet with stalling promises. But if one makes enough noise and nuisance with "nationalistic catchphrases", to get rid of these troublemakers, the administration hands out state secretary, shireman, and other offices generously to satisfy their appetite, and lets them digest for a while.

Our Parliament is like a big theatre, but originality, happenstance, and surprise disappeared from the life of the legislation. The agendas and the actions of the parties are following the same playbook. The members challenge each other and say their piece like drama characters when they make an entrance on the stage. And this is not a figure of speech, but the hard truth – as our distinguished publicist wrote about the Parliament: "***A theatre where they sell out the country.***" The splendid interplay of these managed parties eradicated opposition spirit and independent thought. The entire legislation falls at the feet of the Prime Minister because it's him who is in the center of everything. He has the agrarians, the mercantilists, the anti-Semites, the liberals, the freemasons, and the popular party politicians in his pocket. Each fraction has been given a bunk in this Noah's ark called "National rule". And as long Wekerle is the captain, it's a good life for all of them, there is plenty for everyone.

There are no national accomplishments, but we have been raising taxes; meanwhile, all sorts of racketeering is flourishing: the salt panama, the "Adria", the

local rail lines, – eight lines in one day! – the Norddeutscher Lloyd, the Cunard Line, the Vienna-Pozsony electric locomotive, and God knows what else, nobody is a walking encyclopedia!

The newspaper Nap ("Today") listed a whole bunch of officials from the Ministry of Agriculture who were the eager loyalists of the failed "guardsmen" government, yet they kept their seats. And maybe the critics are right, keeping these crooks in position is nothing compared to the immense calamity and disaster that Polónyi is still the Minister of Justice and that he appointed Dénes Sebess as the head of Land Consolidation in Transylvania! We have to put those in our perspective to judge the wrongdoings of the previous administration!

The fact that the loyalists of the guardsmen administration kept their seats doesn't pose a danger to general interest as long as Darányi remains minister. It's true that there are a couple of points where we are in disagreement: preserving the dominance of the large-scale holdings, protecting the interests of the 1000 acres owners, of the mortmain, against small-scale farmers and peasantry is a capital mistake which may have catastrophic implications – but these are policies, matters of dispute.

It cannot be disputed that Darányi's integrity – ever since he is in public service – was always exemplary, and unless an insurmountable "***necessity***" forced him to do so, he always put the interests of the country and public above any other particular interests and considerations. This means that there is no racketeering in his ministry. Even if there are some corruptible officials with loose integrity there, it's nothing to be afraid of because Darányi is watching everybody's hands with a purist rigor and doesn't tolerate the slightest misuse of power.

Twice the catastrophic loss for the public interest that they appointed Dénes Sebess with the land consolidation in Transylvania. Because this means that Géza Polónyi – with a masterstroke – took the parceling of the Székely forests from Darányi's hands and will act with sovereignty with regard to these forests, through Dénes Sebess who was allegedly the lawyer of Herzberg as well but certainly did represent the Groedel Company together with Géza Polónyi. These are the same Groedels who are being represented by Dezső Polónyi and who are now in the possession of the highest level of political influence to wreck their business rivals and to monopolize the timber trade in Transylvania with assured success!

Taking away the Székely forests from the hands of Darányi and entrusting this multi-million worth of public good to Polónyi is such wackiness that the Székely people should have a new series of emotions to cope with. But the saying that Déness Sebess is better at forest proportioning than Sándor Horváth and that he would stop the racketeering – like Horváth, this exemplary official would ever allow such things! The mere mentioning of Sebess and this man of unusually fine personal honor in the same sentence is repugnant! – is such an unashamed rascality that only our stupefied general public would buy!

We have to clarify just one thing here: that neither Minister Darányi nor Counsellor Horváth has been accused of racketeering ever, their service did not arouse suspicions of any kind! On the other hand, Minister Polónyi and Counsellor Sebess gave plenty of reasons for being suspicious - and as this pamphlet proves it - especially in regard with the Székely forests! But why bother the public and the persons of interest with these appointments, which appointments beg for the question of whether the land consolidation is just a facade to give to the attending of certain particular interests a legal cover?

It's incomprehensible per se how is it possible that either Polónyi or Sebes is handling the land consolidation administratively when under operative laws the constitution took matters of private law out of the jurisdiction of the government...? Or maybe Polónyi is bothered because Transylvania still has an independent judiciary, which doesn't give the judgments this young treasurer of the Groedel company wishes for?

But this will be the subject of the next chapter of the "Panama-studies". I undertook this job for the cleansing of the public sphere, and as I didn't spare the details of the dirty origins of the Groedel millions here, I will research the laundry of the other Panamists sucking on the Székely people's blood with the same zeal, especially of those who have been the subject of my studies already and who acknowledged every choice calling out for the rackets and pillage with coward silence!

Lastly, I, therefore, thank the mediums of the press that noticed my first pamphlet. As part of my appreciation, I ask them again to consider not only my humble persona but justice and public interest, or the search for them at least, in the same spirit I wrote these lines.

ALBERT'S DISSERTATION

Dissertation by Albert Groedel
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The Initial Acquisition of Nationality

Inaugural dissertation
to
Obtaining a doctorate in law
the
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the Royal University of Greifswald
presented by
Albert Groedel
from Marmaros=Sziget in Hungary
Greifswald.

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1894

To his dear uncle
Mr. Ludwig Groedel
With deepest gratitude
Dedicated
From the Author

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§ 1 Introduction.

The underlying idea of acquisitive prescription in general. Its application in public law.

The objective law - "the general will" - if it wants to do justice to its purpose, must emerge from the practical needs of life and coincide with them.

The legal doctrine sees the consequence of this required congruence as sufficient justification for the fact that a purely factual situation can also have an outstanding influence on legal life. If such a thing has existed for a long time, then, as one gets used to it and reckons with its existence, it acquires such a force that it would be downright contrary to the law if it did not give validity, recognition and protection to the fact. For not only the person who is in possession and enjoyment of the actual advantages, but also others who have entered into legal relationships with him in confidence in the legality and duration of his current circumstances, would be harmed and disappointed if, after many years, there was silence If a sudden change were to occur, the foundations of the previous relationships in the state association would collapse. Consideration for the security of legal transactions requires that the law sanction the long-standing actual situation. Time, which "works miracles" in so many things and is said to have the power to heal all wounds, creates new law out of old conditions: "no human mind can escape its influence[144]" and the legal system must also take these considerations into account carry.

In private law, the institute of proceedings was developed at an early stage. At first the property was a subject of acquisition, but soon the usucapion was extended even further, even to rights. The actual owner should be protected against legal attacks from previous entitled parties. As it were, "a protection of the present against the past[145]" was created.

The private law norms on acquisition, this line of thought that was so often called the "invention of the Roman popular spirit," was subsequently transferred to the area of public law. This also has to take into account the practical needs of life and must therefore protect the individual against a change in the existing situation as soon as the individual can claim that a large period of time has passed for the actual circumstances - the state here submits itself to the power of time.

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[144] *Windscheid Bd. I, § 105.*

[145] *Dernburg Bd. I, Seite 331*

In criminal law, it recognizes that the passage of a long period of time since the commission of a criminal act gives rise to the perpetrator's right to impunity, no matter how serious the state's demands for criminal prosecution may be. Yes, even a right to non-execution of a sentence that has already been imposed (the so-called statute of limitations for the execution of a sentence) is applicable law in many states.

In the area of state law, the effort to recognize the factual, long-standing order of things as legitimately existing also had to lead to legally considering those people who had actually belonged to the state in all respects for a long time as citizens.

The result of this was the emergence of the legal institution of obtaining citizenship, the formation and dogmatic content of which in the system of modern constitutional law will be discussed in more detail below.

§ 2. History of the acquisition of citizenship and presentation of the current legal status

a) Historical development up to the beginning of the nineteenth century.

If we now want to get an insight into the legal nature of acquiring citizenship, it is necessary to first look at the history of the institute, right down to our time. The historical presentation is of particular importance here because - as should be said immediately - the acquisition of the indigenous people in the modern rights of individuals, especially in the German states, has almost disappeared, i.e. it is an institution that is now largely a thing of the past.

Tracing these back to their antiquarian starting points is not in the plan of the present work, which makes the concept of nationality coincide with that of citizenship. Our investigations therefore only begin where the seeds of the modern constitutional state are beginning to emerge.

The absolute monarchy of the 17th century first awakened the overall political consciousness of broad sections of the population and thus brought about the breakthrough of the modern state idea, which presupposes the closer cooperative association of the members of the state towards those outside the state[146].

[146]*Zur geschichtlichen Entwicklung im Gebiete des römischen und germanischen Volkslebens. cfr. Mommsen, römisches Staatsrecht, Seite 23 und 61 und S. Rietschel, die Civitas auf deutschen Boden bis zum Ausgange der Karolinger Zeit. Leipzig 1894.*

In this era of transitions and intermediate figures, the legal institute of the landsassiatus plenus, among other things, plays an outstanding role. Foreigners who acquired property within the country were also allowed to seek justice for personal claims before the forum rei sitae. The landsassiatus plenus became particularly important in Electoral Saxony and Mecklenburg. Here, foreigners were only allowed to acquire land if they performed homagial suffering and became constitutionally full subjects of the sovereign; Subjecthood was always linked to the acquisition of property[147].

However, the figure of the landsassiatus plenus never became common law in Germany, especially not in Prussia.

Settling in the cities was important for obtaining citizenship. In these, community citizenship and nationality naturally coincided. With the acquisition of the right of residence and the admission to the city's domicile, the acquisition of civil rights went hand in hand. Only in later times were residential rights and civil rights separated. But if a stranger had been living in the city for a long time, he was tacitly considered to be accepted into the citizenry and could no longer be driven out.

In order to increase the population, which had dwindled after the devastation of the Thirty Years' War, the settlement of foreign colonists in every white area was encouraged in the 17th and 18th centuries. It is well known how Elector Friedrich Wilhelm and the first Prussian kings, subsequently also Frederick the Great, increased the power of the Prussian state by settling Dutch and French immigrants[148].

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[147] *cfr. Stobbe, Bd. I. § 42*

[148] *Rich material can be found in Mylius corpus constitutionum Marchicarum I. to VI. and continuatio I. to IV. Here a patent from March 15, 1718 (Mylius V. Part I. Division 14) should be mentioned, because of the "freedoms that foreigners who settle in royal cities should enjoy". Here it says under No. 4: Let us employ such foreigners, whatever nation they may be, without distinction, like other residents, in the military and civil offices and service to which they are sent. Similarly, a patent dated March 16, 1719, no. 4.: All such attracting foreigners.....gain citizenship free of charge, and under No. 5: We also do not want to make any distinction between them and our native subjects, but rather promote them to spiritual and worldly functions evenly according to their capacities and qualities. Particularly noteworthy from the time of Frederick the Great is the renewed edict of September 1, 1747, which extended benefits and advantages to foreigners who settled in the Royal Prussian lands (Mylius cont. III, page 181 fg.). No. 2 stipulates: "Let us thereby liberate such newly attractive ones*

The goal of domestic policy was to attract immigrants and keep them permanently tied up. Therefore, they were not only granted the right to live on the land assigned to them, but were also promised so-called "free years", hence freedom from taxes and burdens for the first few years after settlement. The foreign settlers were not only viewed and protected as subjects, but were even given priority over the local citizens.

In the eighteenth century, the principle applied both to common German constitutional law and to particular law in general was that subjecthood was established through permanent, legitimate residence in the country. Common law derived this from the Roman legal sources, for example from I. 239 § 2 D. (50,16) "Incola est, qui aliqua regione domicilium suum contulit and from I. 7. C. (10,39): Incolas vero domcilium facit. Of course, it was ignored that incola and indigena (member of the state) are two fundamentally different concepts and that the cited sources only wanted to give the concept of an incola and therefore a resident or settler; But people were even more likely to ignore this because, in addition to individual national affiliation, the so-called Reich citizenship also existed, at least conceptually[149].

Two years from all civil burdens, they can have whatever name they want" and No. 5, paragraph 3: "How we promote all such foreign, wealthy and respectable newcomers and their children, according to each of their characteristics and skills without distinction of religion, like our native children of the country, to both respectable war and civil service."

And in order to attract a lot of foreigners, their respective free withdrawal was legally guaranteed in the edict of September 3, 1749 (Mylius cont. IV, page 185) "whereby those foreign and wealthy particuliers who are from now on in His Royal Majesty's lands will establish, the assurance will be given that if they, for example through Kurtz or Lang, want to acknowledge their establishment in these countries again, they, as their heirs, should then be free from the payment of the deductions and from the assets that they brought with them into this country.

The individual imperial states therefore paid little or no attention not with the

[149]*See, for example, Gönner, Constitutional Law, page 58: "Although everyone in the state is entitled to the protection of their rights and even the foreigner, as long as he stays in the state, enjoys its protection but must obey the laws, the Reich citizenship law is an epitome from the righteous, which locals come before strangers." Gönner wrote like this for two more years*

matter of nationality, or as it was back then was called the "subject society"; They contented themselves with what the Corpus Juris ordered about domicile, in that they viewed every German, with the exception of the imperial agents, as subjects of the Roman emperor in accordance with the imperial constitution, and did not establish any fixed standards with regard to actual foreigners. Therefore they only determined that every inhabitant of the country should be subject to taxes and burdens and owe obedience to the authorities. For this purpose, legal protection was granted at home in the areas of civil and criminal law, as well as exemption from burdens that were specifically imposed on foreigners. Let's listen to the constitutional law teachers at the end of the eighteenth century. Moser, "Treatise on the sovereignty of the German imperial estates in general", cites permanent residence there as the reason for acquiring the state's subjecthood. In his book: "On the Rights and Duties of German Subjects", Section I. § 5, he lists the subjects' reasons for earning a living: (1-3)

4. "So also a stranger who settles in a country without purchasing any goods in order to live off his money for as long as he pleases" and

5. "But if someone buys or otherwise takes possession of lying goods, it depends on the state constitution whether and to what extent he thereby becomes a permanent subject or not." Moser obviously wants to indicate here that it is a matter of particular rights to consider landsassiatus plenus as subjects or not.

Former patron Page 60 says: Reich citizenship will be acquired indirectly through 1. admission to a particular state,

2. State residence, 3. Taking up a state office. Also –

before the dissolution of the empire. Similar to Zachariae, German state and federal law § 92, page 480: "But for the practically meaningful nationality, despite the more and more impressive stately closure of the territories from one another, the common domicile law could still remain decisive because the territories are still parts of one. Of course, this ultimately led to the domicile directly establishing state subjection.

Kreittmayr says, § 37: The state's subservience arises per habitationem perpetuam.

Of course, even for a long-term stay in the country, the intention of real settlement remained doubtful. In order to gain an indication of whether the immigrant intended real settlement or just a temporary stay, certain periods of time were assumed under particular law, after which the subjecthood was intended to expire. Initially in Bavaria, the begging regulations of July 20, 1726 stipulated § 20: "The foreigners, if they can feed themselves and have already been in the country for ten years, are to be kept from the residents of the country." The Codex criminalis of 1751 eliminated the condition of Ability to support themselves and also declared people who vagabond or do business while traveling to be residents if they had acquired the domicile[150], which, as Kreittmayr added in a note[151], happens within ten years according to the begging regulations[152].

In the period that followed, the principle came into force more and more that subjecthood was established by the expiry of certain periods during which one had taken up residence in the country. The statute books of the individual states also contained relevant provisions. We will deal with this below.

It is characteristic of the eighteenth century up to the French Revolution that the word "nationality" is not found in the laws of this time, but only of subordination, a word which already expresses that the citizen has less rights than their duties towards the authorities. In the absolute state, citizens had no part in the administration and government of the state. The rural and imperial estates, which had some influence, were made up of the long-established families; an immigrant could hardly ever be considered as a holder of political rights. Compulsory military service also did not play a major role for the settlers, as the standing armies were mostly recruited through enlistment.

However, the entire status of the citizen changed under the influence of political philosophy towards the end of the eighteenth century and with the French Revolution.

Jean Jacques Rousseau and the French writers who followed him taught that the state was based on a contract with the individual (contract social), that the state order was and should not be anything else. The French Revolution re-

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[150] *It is ordered that beggars, peddlers .....be taken out of the country by the nearest route if they were not born or educated in the country or have not otherwise chosen the domicile.*

[151] *To the Codex jur. bav. Judicarii to § 3 Chapter I*

[152] *cfr. Rehm a.a. O. Page 73; Brater and Luthardt's sheets, vol. 31, page 281.*

placed the corporate order and absolutism with the principles of equality and freedom: all citizens received equal rights against the state and a share in its government within the system of the representative constitution. An essential expression of people's right to self-determination was also found in the fact that they should be free to take up residence and domicile abroad as they wish. The freedom to emigrate was recognized under international law and at the same time the right of the individual to join a foreign association and to change his or her nationality.

In the light of these views and the economic policy teachings (industrial system) that have promoted population movement since the end of the 18th century, the institute of obtaining citizenship acquired ever increasing practical importance. The characteristic feature of the institution was that nationality was acquired ipso jure, regardless of whether entry into the new state association corresponded to the will of the immigrant or the receiving state, and the following were considered essential prerequisites:

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1. Permanent settlement in the area of residence = state, thus establishing a place of residence cum animo non revertendi.

2. Expiry of a longer period of time, which under previous German law, as we will see, was usually ten years and during which residence in the country had to continue uninterrupted.

In keeping with the spirit of the time, the stranger's permanent settlement gave rise to the assumption that he wanted to voluntarily and permanently submit to the power of the receiving state. On the other hand, at least since the end of the eighteenth century, the mere, albeit longer, stay in itself never justified nationality; rather, the animus non revertendi was also necessary, which in turn could only be deduced from the circumstances of settlement and in each individual case had to be determined. Weiss, German Constitutional Law, page 594, mentions the resolution as follows:

"A tacit acceptance lies in the settlement of a stranger insofar as this is done with the intention of taking up a permanent residence there and is associated with a stay as long as the state laws require." Then he adds, "another thing A long stay without the aniumus domicilii never constitutes citizenship, even

though state law should have established the expiration of a certain period of time as a reception title.

On these obviously fluctuating foundations, a continued mixing of the population took place, especially after the development of transport technology, especially in the border districts, which over the years blurred the differences between immigrants and locals and after a few decades the original nationals' conditions were established made impossible.

B) The legal situation in Germany and Austria from the nineteenth century to the present.

Since the beginning of the nineteenth century, the German states, first the Rhine Confederation states, began to introduce representative constitutions under the influence of the French model.

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Citizens gained political voting rights and eligibility for political bodies. This gave nationality a content of special rights, the importance of which made it necessary to differentiate between foreigners and nationals from then on. On the other hand, the obligations of nationals also increased through the introduction of general military service, for which foreigners were naturally not allowed to be called up. In the interest of the common good, the state had to precisely determine the circle of its members according to certain names and principles. Such a determination of his relatives turned out to be an unavoidable need for the state. The tacit acquisition of nationality through naturalization contradicted this need; Because determining whether an immigrant is staying in the country with the intention of permanent residence or only temporarily has often proven to be very difficult and requires time-consuming surveys about the start and duration of the stay. Instead of the tacit acquisition of nationality, legislation increasingly demanded explicit acceptance into the state: the naturalization of the foreigner.

From the individual's point of view, the acquisition of citizenship, the submission to a foreign state power by law without and even perhaps against the will of the immigrant, had to appear incompatible with the immigrant's right to self-determination: modern state consciousness demands that the right of citizenship should not be imposed on anyone, that no one should be forced is

accepted into the cooperative association against his will, to which he henceforth owes loyalty and a duty of obedience to a far greater extent than could be demanded of the local stranger.

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The change in indigenous rights took place in the third and fourth decades of this century; In the first decades, the acquisition of citizenship was still found in most German legislation. There is no coincidence in this, as it might seem. It was precisely at that time that the population had grown significantly for the first time after the depression caused by the Napoleonic Wars; It therefore no longer seemed as necessary as before to facilitate immigration by tacitly granting citizenship rights. In addition, there was a huge increase in traffic through the construction of roads, new connections and finally through the emergence of railways, moments which brought about a change in entire economic life. As a result of the possibility of rapid change of location, the uncertainty about the nationality of the individual was increased and at the same time there was a danger that, in addition to the desired immigration, the state could also receive very undesirable elements that it was not allowed to adopt as its own.

Land law does not deal with the indigenous people at all. The only important ones for our question are §§ 131, 132 Part II tit. 17, which read: "Foreigners who have stayed in local lands but have neither taken up office nor purchased property nor engaged in civil business can leave the country at any time at their own discretion," and further:

"Even those foreigners who have actually settled in the country are free to emigrate again within the first ten years of their arrival. But they must report their decision to the state." You can see that when these regulations were drawn up, the principle of increasing the country's population still played a major role.

On the one hand, due to a lack of legal regulations, it was not clear who was to be considered a Prussian, and on the other hand, there was no common Prussian indigenous people at the time, rather only a territorial citizenship, i.e. an indirect one, in which the territorial rulers were given the right to regulate the indigenous people, as an outflow was left to their power, especially with regard to the rural population.

Here the Stein = Hardenberg reform legislation intervened, and the famous edict of October 9, 1807 (collection of laws 1807 page 172) determined "the easier ownership and free use of land = property, as well as the personal circumstances of the rural residents" in § 10 "Furthermore, after the date of this regulation, no relationship of subservience arises, neither by birth or marriage, nor by taking on a subordinate position, nor by contract."

After the outdated conditions of subjection had been abolished, it soon became necessary to establish regulations relating to nationality for the whole of Prussia, and the conclusion was drawn from the aforementioned land law provisions argumento e contrario that Prussian subjecthood was created ipso jure by ten years of residence in the country acquired as binding for the immigrant as well as for the state.

The fact that this conclusion was drawn back then certainly seems to emerge from an edict issued on July 2, 1812 "on account of the emigration of Prussian subjects and their naturalization in foreign states" (Collection of Laws 1812, page 114 below). Given the times, the aim was to make it more difficult for Prussian subjects to emigrate. The edict, of course, had to first determine who was to be considered a Prussian subject, and it does so in § 1, which forms the basis for the following orders, as follows: "Those individuals who are natives of our states, furthermore those who are not natives of our states, but have had their habitual residence there for ten years.....as well as those who are also not natives of our states, but have held an office in our service, "shall..... and so on--------Accordingly, back then one became a subject 1. by birth, 2. by ten years of residence, 3. by holding a state office.

However, after the foreign yoke was shaken off, the edict of July 2, 1812 was repealed and an edict of September 15, 1818 (Collection of Laws 1818, page 175) under No. I: "All emigration will be permitted in the future under the following conditions, so that from now on "The emigration cases should all be dealt with according to the principles of general land law in all provinces of our monarchy."

Simon, Volume II, page 574 claims that only this edict established a common indigenous population for the Prussian state, but the concept of a Prussian subject, as established by the edict of 1812, certainly remained of great impor-

tance, and Prussia therefore retained the inheritance in the first decades of this century[153].

The High Tribunal and the High Administrative Court recognized that, until 1843, citizenship was acquired through residence in Prussia:

1. Without expiry of the deadline if the establishment was approved by the police,

2. After ten years of permanent residence, even if the settlement was not approved by the police.

The police approval of the former case was required in a decree of the Minister of the Interior dated January 31, 1838[154].

The law auditors, who had to examine general land law for the purpose of legal reforms, reported on §§ 131, 132 II, 17: "It is undisputed that ten years of residence establish the Prussian indigenous people. It is doubtful whether a permanent residence in Prussia could not have the same effect before ten years have passed. On the other hand, the acquisition of land and even the performance of homagial suffering are not sufficient. It is advisable to repeal Section 131 and replace it with more stable standards[155].

Taking these considerations into account, the Prussian law of December 31, 1842 "on the acquisition and loss of the status as a Prussian subject also broke

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[153] *The decision of the Higher Tribunal of January 11, 1853 (Striethorst, archive page 177) states, without any further justification, that foreigners who took up residence in Prussia with the approval of the administrative authorities were, until the law of December 31, 1842, the Prussian indigenous population acquired. The decision of the Higher Administrative Court of June 30, 1886 (Ministerial Gazette for Internal Administration, page 202 below) confirms this and adds that the legal principle was correctly derived from Sections 131, 132 and 149 of general land law that it is proof of the authority's authority Consent is not required, rather the indigenous status was acquired even without it if residence in the country continued for ten years. However, within the meaning of § 132 II, 17, actual settlement in the country is not the same as mere residence without establishing one's own business, as servants, craftsmen and the like usually do.*

[154] *Regarding this decree (Kamptz, Volume 22, page 30) it says: "To date, the principle has been generally applied that a foreigner who takes up residence within the Royal States with the approval of the authorities acquires the status of a subject on this side will continue to have to be applied until provisions are made in the legislative process."*

[155] *Cfr. Simon, Seite 577*

with the principle of acquiring nationality by stipulating in Section 13: "The residence in the future[156], states should establish their status as Prussians for themselves alone.

For Austria, Sections 29, 30 and 31 of the General Civil Code of 1811 are decisive for the acquisition of nationality. According to this, foreigners acquired Austrian nationality except through descent and so on

1. by entering the public service,

2. by taking up a business, the operation of which requires regular residence in the country,

3. through ten years of continuous residence provided the stranger is in good standing.

We see from this that the law of 1811 recorded the acquisition of nationality, but was only broken with the establishment of the landsassiatus plenus, with Section 31 stipulating: "By the mere possession or temporary use of a country estate, house or piece of land and so on without personal Austrian citizenship is not acquired upon residency.

However, the provisions of Section 29 could not remain in effect for long and special laws were gradually passed that abolished the tacit acquisition of citizenship. However, this only happened in fits and starts, as Austria still lacks a comprehensive, special law on state membership.

First, the Court Chancellery Decree of March 1, 1833, No. 2597 of the Justice= Law= Collection, according to which "the acquisition should only take place when the foreigner has duly identified himself as having completed ten years of uninterrupted residence at the state office of his last place of residence, upon whose order the subject has sworn an oath and accompanied by a certificate of authentication However, the stranger cannot be admitted to this oath until the state office has been fully convinced that he has not only not incurred any punishment for a crime during the time mentioned, but has also continued to com-

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[156]*The words "in the future" mean that in the past, the indigenous people in Prussia were acquired through taking up residence, as explained above. The cited court decision of January 11, 1853 says: "The foreigner who had already acquired indigenous status when the law of December 31, 1842 was published according to the older provisions in question must continue to be viewed as a citizen of the Prussian state."*

ply with the law and obedient to the orders of the legal authorities and of good manners and never gave rise to any justified suspicion or complaint through his behavior and way of thinking[157].

Because of the mere passage of time, no one has been able to become an Austrian citizen since then. However, ten years of residence was still considered, but only as a prerequisite for an express naturalization request.

However, according to the Court Decree of 1833, the state finds itself in a predicament when it comes to those who are being taken in. If the latter has satisfied all the requirements listed above, then he must be accepted into the state association upon his request. There has been no change in the law, but the administrative authorities are given the most freedom when it comes to accepting foreigners; Doubtful cases are the top priority to be communicated for assessment.

Through the transitional provisions of the court decree, for the first time due consideration was given to the right of self-determination of foreigners. If they had already become ipso jure Austrians through ten years of residence before March 1, 1833, they were still free to renounce their citizenship within six months by proving that they had no intention of becoming Austrian citizens[158].

The Homeland Law of December 3, 1863 (§ 2 and § 8) further requires that, before acquiring citizenship, the foreigner must also have acquired the right to live in an Austrian municipality, for which he must provide identification[159].

As shown, the court decree of 1833 overturned the essential part of Section 29 of the old civil code. It was used to abolish an outdated institute; Continuing along the path it had begun, Austrian legislation also abolished the other provisions of tacit acceptance into the state association.

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[157] *von Stubenrauch, commentary page 82 and following.*

[158] *See Milner page 45 f. following*

[159] *cfr. von Kirchstetter, commentary on § 29 of the old civil code. The ministerial decrees of August 30, 1850 and December 19, 1851 had already been issued on the same matter.*

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Following the introduction of the new trade law of December 20, 1859, the acquisition of citizenship by operating a business that required residence in the country was abolished by an imperial decree of April 27, 1860 (No. 108 Reichsgesetzblatt).

The last remnant of tacit acceptance into the state association was eliminated by the Basic Law of December 21, 1867, Article III, in which it stipulated that foreigners were only permitted to take up state office if they had previously been expressly granted Austrian citizenship.

As a result of the provisions cited, Section 29 of the old civil code has been repealed, and accordingly the Austrian constitutional law teachers now unanimously describe the acquisition of citizenship as derogation[160].

While we have just dealt with the legal situation in Austria, which was still part of the political association of the German Confederation when we received the institute we are dealing with here, we will now have to deal with the provisions of the other German federal states regarding the acquisition of citizenship[161].

In doing so, it will be necessary to take into account a series of treaties that are almost identical in wording and which were concluded by a number of German states between themselves from 1816 until the middle of this century, "for the mutual takeover of vagabonds and expelled people".

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[160] *Comparison Ulbrich, textbook page 81; the same in Marquardsen's manual page 35; Jegierek pages 12, 13 and 34; Milner page 46.*

[161] *The state legislation was in force until the introduction of the Reich Law of June 1, 1870 "on the acquisition and loss of citizenship. This also applies to the countries incorporated into Prussia in 1866, in which the Prussian law of December 31, 1842 was not introduced, but rather the old regulations remained in force. As a result, the members of these countries should no longer be viewed as foreigners by Prussia (Ministry Sheet see Administration 1866 page 211), ctr. Rönne, constitutional law. Third edition, pages 13 and 14. (The fourth edition has omitted the relevant material here as "historical"). The literature for the constitutions of the individual states can be found: in Zachariae, Constitutional Laws 1855 for the older ones, Störk, Handbook of Constitutions for the more recent times, and also in Rönne, page 14 fg. See also "Müller, the Gotha Convention", Pfister, Baden constitutional law, page 38 and page 58 ffg.*

For us, these agreements are of particular importance because in them they are usually called "vagabonds = conventions" and the acquisition of citizenship as an acquisition title for nationality was given outstanding effect[162].
In the text, which has the same wording in almost all conventions, it said in § 1:

"In the future, no vagabond or criminal should be expelled into the territory of the other of the two high contracting parts unless he is either a citizen of the state to which he is assigned and has to seek his home there or at least through the territory of the same must take its own path."

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Of course, the determination of which people should be considered nationals of the individual states should have been left to the state legislatures.

Of course, it had to be in the interest of the contracting governments that conditions for the acquisition and loss of nationality were as uniform as possible in

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[162] *The vagabond conventions turned out to be a particular necessity at that time because homelessness was increasing at a frightening rate, due to the fact that, on the one hand, the state legislation only made inadequate provisions on nationality, and on the other hand, the numerous territorial changes at the beginning of the century made it important to determine the nationality of the individual made more difficult.*
The first such treaty was concluded between Baden, Bavaria and Württemberg on March 7, 1816, as a result of a suggestion from Baden, which had already made a similar pact with Switzerland in 1808 (see Badisches Government Gazette 1816, page 139 ffg.); This was followed on May 21, 1818 by the Bavarian=Prussian treaty (see Prussian collection of laws, page 53 fg.), then on February 5, 1820 by the Prussian=Saxon treaty (Prussian collection of laws 1820, page 40). Most of the other federal states, albeit excluding Austria, joined later. The conventions were changed somewhat in the 1940s and remained in force until, following a suggestion from Prussia, a large number of German federal states met in Gotha in 1851 to jointly regulate the subject. The well-known "Gotha Convention" came about here on July 15, 1851 (see Prussian Code of Laws 1851, page 711 fg.). Section 13 paragraph 2 stipulated: "As of January 1, 1852, all agreements regarding the takeover of expelled persons that previously existed between the contracting states cease to be in force." Of course, the establishment of the North German Confederation or of the Reich resulted in the repeal of the convention, with the law on supportive residence of June 6, 1870 now applying. But the same thing is not introduced in Bavaria and Alsace Lorraine. The idea on which the convention is based was also taken up by the Empire, which concluded similar conventions with foreign states, for example with Switzerland, Italy, Belgium and, more recently, with Russia. A collection of the vagabond conventions concluded by Prussia, although not entirely complete, can be found in Rohrscheidt, Prussians State Treaties, Berlin 1852, page 76).

the individual states, so that one state would not find itself in a more favorable position than the other in terms of accepting deportees[163].

On the one hand, they wanted to take this into account, but on the other hand, in most of the contracting states, at the time the conventions were concluded, i.e. in the 1920s, there were no legal standards at all about nationality or, at most, there was an administrative practice that was not even generally established, but rather was handled differently in the individual parts of the country . However, if there really were legal provisions (for example in Bavaria and Baden), they did not contradict the principles of the conventions on nationality, or only contradicted them in minor points.

It was therefore believed that the correct wording had been found for § 2 of the Conventions, with the words: "As nationals, whose adoption must not be refused to each other". The individual classes then follow, including: b) those who happened to be born within the national territory of homeless parents, as long as they have not lived in another state for ten years with the approval of the authorities.

c.) those who were neither born in the state territory nor acquired the right of subjection according to its constitution, but who have come into closer contact with the state through the fact that they have been tacitly permitted to take up residence there for a period of ten years have.

Section 3 of the Convention then further determines how it should be handled if several of the types of acquisition of nationality mentioned in Section 2 come together. Then the decisive type of acquisition should be considered, unless expressly included, acquisition through ten years of residence.

The provisions of the conventions as well as the principle of acquisition as a means of acquiring nationality have undoubtedly had a significant influence in the individual states.

However, in view of the fact that there is only an incorrect version of § 2, in which one should have said "persons" instead of "nationals", one can only at-

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[163] *This ambition was also expressed at the Gotha Convention. (cfr. Müller a.a.O. page 31). There the legation councilor Dr. I would like to ask whether it might not seem appropriate to agree on the establishment of common principles on nationality. The proposal was rejected "because it was currently neither considered feasible nor expedient to intervene in the existing state legislation through the agreement now to be concluded".*

tribute them secondary importance to established administrative regulations or even to legal norms.

This also refutes Bornhak's view (Prussian Constitutional Law, Freiburg 1888, Vol. I, page 236) that in Prussia the term "nationality" had to be derived from Section 2 of the Convention until the law of December 31, 1842 was passed . We have shown above that a uniform administrative practice with regard to "nationality" was formed there based on the state law provisions and the edict of 1812.

For example, where would there be any evidence that citizenship was ever acquired in Prussia "through marriage and the establishment of its own domestic economy," as Bornhak assumes?

Rehm a.a. turns against Bornhak. Page 144. He says: "Bornhak overlooked or wanted to overlook the fact that the conventions only came into being with regard to a certain class of people." However, one can object to this that § 2 expressly speaks of "nationals". However, one cannot establish different norms about "nationality" with regard to those people whose expulsion may be a question than those that are generally applied. If Rehm further claims that if one adheres to Bornhak's view, one must come to the assumption that the Gotha Convention, in contrast to the Prussian law of December 31, 1842, created new acquisition titles for nationality, then it must be said that the Gotha Convention and later the treaties concluded by the Reich only speak of "persons" whose "acceptance" should not be refused. The "nationality relationships" of these people to the receiving state are, of course, determined by the legal provisions of the latter.

While Bornhak obviously goes too far, Rehm attaches too little importance to the convention provisions. The fact that these were given secondary validity can be seen from the supplementary provisions through which the vagabond conventions were supplemented since 1835 and in which it was expressly emphasized that the state legislation with regard to nationality was not bound by the convention. In some states, the vagabond conventions were expressly taken into account when drafting constitutional norms on nationality, especially if one wanted to exclude the acquisition of nationality by acquisition, as the conventions knew it.

For example, § 6 of the Basic Law for the unified rural constitution of the Duchy of Saxony = Meiningen, after talking about the acquisition of subjecthood through birth, through obtaining citizenship in a place and through entry into public service, goes on to say: "In how The fact that a mere ten-year stay gives the foreigner subject rights depends on the existing regulations in individual parts of the country and on the treaties until a general law is issued other states."

The Basic Law of the Duchy of Saxony = Altenburg also commemorates the Vagabond = Conventions in Section 41 of the Basic Law of April 29, 1831. It says there: "The naturalization of homeless people is decided by the contracts concluded or yet to be agreed with several federal states." Apparently it should For the homeless, the acquisition of citizenship through acquisition is retained.

In Baden in particular we find a whole range of relationships

between the legislation and the vagabonds = conventions The so-called VI. Constitutional Edict § 8 the indigenous people. Under Lit. d (Government Gazette of 1808, page 153) it was determined that native rights were to be regarded as acquired through ten years of honest residence in the country if the person who claimed this acquired title for himself failed to or lost his foreign citizenship and the state have not yet worried about maintaining it. Only journeymen, pupils and servants who have stayed in the country for more than ten years without being self-employed should be excluded.

But we have already noted on page 26 that the first vagabond convention was concluded in Baden with Württemberg and Bavaria and that the inspiration for it came from the former. However, § 8 of the convention has almost the same wording as § 8 lit. d of the Baden Edict of 1808 regarding journeymen and so on. We see from this that the Baden diplomats, to whom one can probably attribute the draft of the first convention of March 7, 1816, tried as much as possible to bring it into line with domestic legislation on nationality.

The process of obtaining citizenship was practically non-existent in Baden until

Years 1854. At that time, Baden joined the Gotha Convention, which repealed the previous expulsion conventions.

Now that you were no longer bound in any way to the old convention. Because the Gothaer only establishes the assumption of liabilities, the acquisition of citizenship could also be banned from the legislation, and this was also done through a regulation of March 17, 1854.

The Baden government gazette from 1854, page 53, mentions the accession of the Grand Duchy to the Gotha Convention and the abolition of the decree in immediately successive decrees.

Only gradually has the legislation in the individual German states converted to the view that the state alone is competent with regard to the admission of foreigners into the state association and that the tacit acquisition of nationality excludes descent from a resident and marriage of a foreigner into the country be. However, it was still generally held that the appointment of a foreigner to a state office created ipso jure citizenship. This latter method of acquiring citizenship is still recognized in almost all federal state constitutions.

For example, the Württemberg constitutional document determines this from September 25, 1819 in § 19: Citizenship is acquired partly by birth.....partly by admission..... In addition, employment in the state service results in admission to citizenship, but only for the duration of the service. Furthermore, in the regulation concerning the acquisition and loss of the status of a Mecklenburg subject of June 1, 1853, Mecklenburg stipulates in § 2 that indigenous status for foreigners is never established by mere domiciliation in the country. In contrast, § 1, VI recognizes acquisition through employment in the state service. The constitutional document of the Grand Duchy of Hesse lists the indigenous people's reasons for acquiring employment (1-2), 3. being awarded a state office, 4. special exception. Baden, which, as we have already explained, has had indigenous legislation since 1808, also stipulates in the constitutional document of August 29, 1818, § 9, paragraph 2: "All foreigners whom we confer as a statesman immediately receive the indigenous status through this award."

In a number of German federal states, on the other hand, people still adhered to the common domicile position or allowed nationality to arise with the acquisition of community citizenship, thus ignoring the importance of the matter and leaving one only to think of the political rights associated with the indigenous people the regulation of the nationality of a corporation subordinate to the state.

The acquisition of municipal citizenship often depended on a stay within the municipality of several years or even took place following private law council no. The fact that efforts were made to organize in a secure manner the concepts of nationality, which often still fluctuate as a result of the dependence on community citizenship, is evident from the express provision in some legislations

that the matter would be regulated later through a law. Of course, in most cases these promised laws have not been passed.

For example, the landscape regulations for the Duchy of Braunschweig dated October 12, 1832 do not yet contain the term nationality at all; She summarizes the entirety of her subjects in § 24 in the words: "Anyone who has legally acquired the right of residence within the borders of the national territory is a resident of the state." Saxony's constitutional document of September 4, 1831 reserves the provisions on citizenship law to a special one laws (§ 25); According to the Hanoverian state constitutional law of August 6, 1840, state subjecthood (§ 27) is acquired according to law and tradition. However, such a law did not exist in Hanover and was never passed. Therefore, the police regulation of July 6, 1827 (cfr. Roenne page 14) on determining the place of residence and therefore the right to live in a place must also be applied to nationality. However, this is acquired through express acceptance into a community, which in rural communities is associated with the acquisition of ownership of a residential building. The constitutional document for Electoral Hesse dated January 5, 1831 also refers to a law that was to be enacted but was never actually enacted. According to Section 20, nationality is acquired through express or "tacit" admission.

If we take the sum of what has been said, it emerges that the acquisition of citizenship played an even more important role in the older constitutional law of the German states, the more the public law of the time was accessible to institutions with a populationist tendency. However, the limitations of the principle soon appeared after jurisprudence and state administration made it clear that the population increase achieved with the help of the institute could not replace the sensitive disadvantages that arose as a result of that principle. At the forefront of these evils we find the ever-increasing indeterminacy of population conditions at a time when the legal system, both in the area of private law and public law, had to be inclined to demand full certainty and precession for the question of nationality. Since the middle of our century, with the increase in international traffic, the more the idea has become established that nationality forms the legal means of structuring the elements of the people, and that a sharp boundary must be drawn between nationality and the quality of being a foreigner, the more the institute of the establishment of the Nationality must be limited in its practical validity.

The German national state, established in 1870, finally eliminated the institute, which had become untenable, from German constitutional law through the Re-

ich Law of June 1, 1870 on the acquisition and loss of imperial and nationality. Came into force as a law of the North German Confederation on January 1, 1871, valid as an imperial law in Württemberg, Baden and Hesse since the same day, in Bavaria since May 13, 1871, in Elsas = Lorraine since March 31, 1873, [164]) determines this Law in Section 12 corresponding to Section 13 of the Prussian

Law of December 31, 1842: "Residence within a federal state does not in itself establish citizenship." Residence within a federal state is therefore of no fundamental importance for the acquisition of indigenous status. Rather, according to Section 2 of the law, from now on citizenship will only be acquired through descent, legitimation, marriage, admission for Germans and naturalization for foreigners.

For the latter, the Reich Law § 8 requires nothing more than the ability to act, integrity, sufficient earning capacity and proof of their own apartment or accommodation in the place where they want to settle. According to the wording of the law, it is not necessary that the settlement must have already taken place in order to be naturalized. However, Prussian practice[165] requires proof of settlement within the country before the naturalization application is approached; this is the final effect of the domicile principle in Reich nationality law.

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c) Foreign law.

France early on viewed the granting of citizenship as a special honor that could only be given to foreigners because of outstanding merit. It was only at the time of the French Revolution that this was abandoned by allowing the tacit acquisition of nationality. The Constitution of June 24, 1793 stipulated that every foreigner who was 21 years old and had lived in France for a year, lived there from his work, acquired property, married, adopted a child or cared for an old person was, by law, a French citizen. without having to take the civic oath.

However, this law disappeared with the revolutionary period. Since then, there has been no tacit acquisition of nationality in France[166].

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[164] *Cahn, commentary, page 10*

[165] *Cahn, a.a. O. zu § 8, Note 13.*

[166] *So says Cogordan la Nationale page 134: "La Cour de cassation (arret du 24 avril 1827) a reconnu que l acquiscement tacite resultant d um sejour en France, si prolonge qu on le suppose*

England comprehensively regulated the acquisition of nationality in the Naturalization Act of May 12, 1870. According to this, the same is only justified by birth or naturalization. A tacit acquisition of nationality is to be regarded as excluded since it is not permitted by law[167].

I would particularly like to highlight the indigenous conditions in Hungary. Here, according to old tradition, a longer residence in the country used to constitute citizenship. However, Article L: 1879 now applies (in German by Moritz Rath, Budapest), which is modeled exactly on the German law of June 1, 1870, but in some respects expands and explains more clearly the somewhat brief provisions of its model. Acquiring citizenship is expressly excluded in Section 13.

In the legislation of most European countries there is no longer any mention of acquiring citizenship through long-term domicile; the acquisition of citizenship is tacitly ignored when listing the reasons for acquiring state membership; Rather, naturalization in the "form of express or tacit bestowal" has generally taken its place.

In Europe, as far as the relevant material is available for review, citizenship acquisition only occurs in Denmark[168].

In Denmark a distinction is made between "subservience" and "citizenship". Permanent settlement in Denmark establishes subservience, hence the duty of loyalty and obedience to the Danish state. The immigrant is subject to all state obligations, including compulsory military service. However, according to Section 2 of the Conscription Act of March 6, 1869, those immigrants for whom state contracts or foreign servitude conflict with the completion of compulsory military service in Denmark are exempt from compulsory military service.

ne peut avoir pour effet de conferer la qualite de Francais . It is not a part of the fair ressortir les inconvenients qui, dans la pratique, resulteraient de l incertitude qu un pareil systeme apporterait dans les questions de statut personnel."
Westlake= von Holtzendorff, Private International Law § 263-270

[167]*Westlake= von Holtzendorff, Private International Law § 263-270*

[168] *Stoerk, Staatssubtanen page 646. Cogordan ibid. page 242: "La naturalization involontaire, admite sans avoir ete sollicitee, est abandonnee aujord hui dans I Europe entiere comme contraire aux principes fondamentaux du droit des gens"*

Such international treaties have been concluded with England, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands and Switzerland. A formal treaty has not been concluded with the German Reich, but the Danish government has administratively exempted the Germans who have settled in Denmark from compulsory military service after it was established that Danish nationals residing in Germany were also subject to German military compulsory not subject to. After two years of residence in Denmark, the foreigner may no longer be deported. He will also not be extradited to foreign countries and enjoys the protection of the Danish state. On the other hand, the active and passive political and municipal right to vote, the ability to hold public office, and the right to support the poor are reserved for native citizens. A foreigner can only acquire full citizenship rights through a special application in which his or her naturalization is declared[169].

(Article 25 of the Constitution of June 5, 1849.)

Norway also had similar legal principles. Until in 1776 there was no difference at all between the immigrant and native inhabitants. However, an ordinance of January 15, 1776 reserved the exclusive right to offices and government jobs to the natives. Since then, the permanent residence in Norway has established the relationship of subjection, which included compulsory military service, unless a relationship of dependence on a foreign state prevented this. In contrast, the acquisition of civil rights was only possible for the immigrant gradually and after certain periods of time. After three years of permanent residence, he was no longer allowed to be deported, despite any crimes he had committed; after five years he had the right to be included in the list of eligible voters. After ten years he also acquired the right to hold public office.[170]) This legal status existed in Norway until the enactment of a new law of April 21, 1888. According to this, residency can only be granted to a son of Norwegian parents born outside Norway or to one in Norway Citizenship can be acquired by birth (Article 2 b). However, the law recognizes the tacit acquisition of citizenship through entry into the Norwegian public service. Article 3 regulates naturalization, which can only take place upon a special request after a stay in Norway of at least three years (Cogordan ibid, page 207).

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[169] *Cfr. Goss and Hansen, Denmark's constitutional law in Marquardsen's handbook § 9,10 and 11.*

[170] *Cfr. Aschehoug, the constitutional law of Sweden and Norway, § 97.*

Outside Europe, the acquisition of citizenship is still often permitted by the laws of some South American free states. The consideration that used to be decisive in Europe also plays a major role here, namely to increase the population of the states, therefore to bring in colonists and to guarantee them greater legal security compared to the state of their birth through the easy acquisition of citizenship.

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Mexico, for example[171], in the "Law of May 28, 1886" allows tacit naturalization in Articles 10, 11 and 12 if a foreigner holds a public office, has children in Mexico or has acquired property there. In each of these acts a tacit reason for acquiring Mexican nationality is seen, in such a way that it occurs unless it is expressly declared that one wishes to maintain one's ancestral nationality. If you don't make any declaration in this regard, it is tacitly assumed that you want to become Mexican.

According to Article 32 of the Constitution, Bolivia considers as a national anyone who has lived there for a year and has declared his wish to be accepted into the Bolivian federation before the authorities; The application may only be rejected in precisely certain cases.

Venezuela allows all immigrants by justifying the of residence become citizens. A resolution from December 1, 1865 expressly states that naturalization must take place even without the immigrant's own request.

According to the constitution of September 10, 1829, Uruguay declared citizens by law (citoyens legaux) all foreigners who marry a native, acquire property, operate an industry, have served in the army or have lived in the country for three years, if unmarried, for four years .

Argentina made similar provisions in the law of October 1, 1869. Article 2 (Cogordan loc. cit., page 465) states: Sont Argentins par naturalization

1 Les etranges qui, ayant demeure deux annees la declaration de leur desir de devenir citoyens

2 Les etrangers qui ont rendu a P Etat les services....

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[171] *The sources for the following can be found at Cogordan a.a. O. Pages 242-248, further in his compilation of the various legislations on nationality following page 455.*

The source is the duration of the residence from the Republic.

Meanwhile, the realization has also emerged in South America that it is incompatible with the right of self-determination of foreigners to make them members of the state without their consent and without a special request.

Brazil only grants, upon special request, the inclusion in the state association (law of July 12, 1871), and in Urugay, according to a law from 1853, citizenship is only granted through a naturalization patent upon special request. Peru requires entry in the citizen lists, Chile for ten years, Colombia for one year and a request for naturalization.

Even in South America, obtaining citizenship is no longer generally recognized.

It should also be noted that almost all South American states consider children born on their territory to be citizens and that this has often led to difficulties in international traffic. We'll get into it

§ 4 have to speak.

According to the law of April 14, 1802, the United States of North America not only required an express naturalization application from the immigrant in order to obtain citizenship, but also a five-year residency and an oath declaration of desire to become an American citizen, which must be made two years before the application (cfr. Cahn. ibid. pages 374,375).

§ 3. The objections arising from the nature of nationality against the tacit acquisition of it.

The acquisition of indigenous status has such far-reaching consequences for the receiving state that express consent, as we have already mentioned in the historical explanations, appears necessary not only on the part of the immigrant, but also on the part of the receiving state, before the legally effective entry into the status of nationality begins . In its current form, this means a combination of rights and duties which, on the one hand, affects the whole person and, on the other hand, intervenes much more deeply in state life than subservience in the absolute state. It includes[172])

[172] *crf. Stoerk, State Subjects and Foreigners page 631 following*

1. the duty of loyalty and obedience to the state, including compulsory military service and the duty to return to the flag in the event of war (jus avocandi of the state);

2. the permanent right of residence in the national territory, excluding the state's power of expulsion, but including the right of asylum in the event of extradition requests from foreign states;

3. the right to legally guaranteed participation in state administration through political voting rights and eligibility for public office;

4. the right to protection abroad against foreign states.

The right of residence is the primary content of citizenship that cannot be ignored from the overall picture of the civil legal sphere, in a sense the minimum of subjective powers that can be associated with the indigenous people. As long as the immigrant can be deported at will, there is no permanent legal relationship between him and the state. Until the constitutional state was established on a representative basis, the effect of nationality was essentially limited to the right of residence; In addition, only the right to legal protection could be considered. Therefore, the choice of residence could determine nationality. The inner life of the receiving state remained unaffected by immigration. If the right of residence is associated with submission to public duties and taxes, then the first level of citizenship has been reached[173]. It may have more rights attached to it, but it doesn't have to.

The scope of the law is not decisive for the concept of "nationality". As the example of Denmark, the United States[174] and even Hungary[175] shows, it is possi-

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[173] *Bar, international private law page 181, still considers the right of residence to be the only "essential" component of nationality. But aren't civic duties also an essential part of citizenship law?*

[174] *In the United States, although one can be naturalized after five years of residence in the country, one can only gain the ability to be elected as a representative after seven years of obtaining citizenship, and after nine years as a senator. With regard to passive eligibility for the presidency, the principle applies according to Article II of the Constitution Decree I (5): "No person except a natural born citizen shall be eligible for the office of President" through Article XII of the Amendment, Section 3, this provision is also valid extended to the vice president. Cfr. Slept, Constitution of the North American Union, page 110, page 197..*

[175] *In Hungary, the naturalized person can only become a member of the legislature after a long period of time.*

ble that the same state includes citizens with lesser and greater political rights.

In particular, it is not necessary for the concept of nationality that the right to vote and stand for election is given, which, as a result of legislation, is completely missing for women, children and so on. The fundamental non-extradition of one's own relatives to foreign states is not an essential part of nationality, but has recently become customary law under international law. However, political rights and the power to exercise them are now far more important than the right of residence for the receiving state.

As a rule, nothing stands in the way of foreigners being allowed to take up residence in the country, as long as they do not act contrary to the laws[176] that the local government has passed for criminal policy, police or statistical reasons, unless it has to be the case Difficulties are what are intended to prevent sensitive disruptions in the national life of the state that orders them[177].

If, as in Germany in particular, the full enjoyment of political rights occurs immediately upon the beginning of citizenship, the immigrant has the opportunity to immediately intervene actively in the innermost life of the receiving state. In the interest of self-preservation, the receiving state is therefore forced to first examine whether new citizens are likely to be beneficial to the state before accepting new citizens. Not only must he prevent immigration from increasing the number of poor or criminals, he must also protect the native population against the danger that excessive immigration of foreigners will damage their national interests. Such a danger exists particularly in border provinces. Here the state must ensure that the indigenous population is preserved and strengthened. The naturalization of aliens must be restricted or prevented in such circumstances. Enemy elements must remain excluded from acquiring citizenship rights. Only the possibility of always being able to make use of the expulsion of foreigners who are dangerous to the state despite their permanent residence corresponds to the state's interest here, while a seizure of nationality could easily lead to a mixture of population components that is detrimental to the overall purpose of the state and to the displacement of the local residents.

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[176] *See German Penal Code § 284 (Expulsion of foreigners if they are guilty of commercial gambling.)*

[177] *See Stoerk, article "Foreign Police" in the Concise Dictionary of Political Sciences, page 681.*

The state may not impose state membership on any foreigner through tacit ipso iure acquisition, because a forced citizen is not a loyal citizen, nor a secure support of the community. But he is also not allowed to allow foreigners to be forced upon him as citizens, because the interest of self-preservation plays an important role in accepting them. Just as the state tries to divert hostile elements after annexing new parts of the country by granting the option, it must also be able to protect itself and its people's uniqueness by excluding foreign immigrants from citizenship[178].

If, according to the foregoing, the acquisition of nationality contradicts the tendency of our current public law to bring certainty into population conditions and to secure the status of each individual in only legally relevant directions, then the institute has been completely replaced in terms of its actual effectiveness by better institutions. Particularly under current German law, the acquisition is unnecessary because the Imperial Law of June 1, 1870 facilitates naturalization to such an extent that an increase is hardly conceivable. Any person who is capable of acting and working and who is in good standing can be naturalized at their request, without being required to own any significant assets or to stay in the country for a long period of time, etc. Anyone who wants to acquire the German indigenous population will generally be able to acquire it, unless there are overriding and compelling state interests.

Of course, the situation is different in sparsely populated states that are interested in improving the national culture through immigration and which have a surplus of land. Under such circumstances, the quality of the immigrants is less important than the quantity, and the acquisition of citizenship is permitted here because it is intended to permanently tie the settlers to their new homeland.

Another disadvantage that is regularly associated with the acquisition of nationality is that it significantly promotes the emergence of dual state membership. However, many states allow the original ipso iure to cease with the acquisition of a foreign nationality, for example France[179]) Italy[180]) and others; But

[178] *Stoerk, Option and Plebiscite, pages 30, 35.*

[179] *Code civil §17: The quality of the Francais is perda par la naturalization (hence the acquisition of nationality here) in the lands of etranger.*

[180] *Article 11 paragraph 2 of the Civil Code. What is striking is Article 12, according to which the*

other states do not allow the indigenous people to stop, even after obtaining a new nationality, such as Germany, Austria = Hungary and the United States. If nationality is acquired without the authorities having the opportunity to examine the immigrant's indigenous status and possibly refuse admission if they still have foreign nationality[181], it can easily happen that a person comes into possession of multiple nationalities. However, theory and state practice agree that this anomalous condition cannot be beneficial in the long term neither to the population conditions of the states in question nor to the legal security of the subject and his descendants[182].

§ 4 Consequences of the cancellation of the decree Nationality.

Even if nationality may not be viewed as a burden that is imposed on immigrants against their will, but as an advantage and a legal benefit that may only be granted upon special request after prior examination, the welfare of the state can nevertheless require an extension of certain legal consequences Require citizenship for foreigners residing in the country. It is important to point out here that the earlier acquisition of nationality had a great advantage for the state in that it prevented foreigners from settling in the country and permanently enjoying the same advantages and legal protection as the natives, but nevertheless of essential ones Obligations of a public legal nature in state and community life, in self-administration and in particular remained free from military conscription. After the certain deadlines had expired, they were considered nationals in the system of older law and could therefore, for example,

obligation to serve in the army still exists despite the loss of citizenship.

[181] *Naturalization into the German subject association is granted to the subjects of Austria (according to the federal decree of June 24, 1877), Persia (according to the treaty of June 11, 1873, Reichsgesetzblatt page 351 and following), Turkey (according to the circular letter from the Reich Office of the Interior dated July 11 1883), Morocco (according to the convention of July 3, 1880, Reichsgesetzblatt 1881 page 103 ff) only granted if they can prove that they were released from the former state association, Cahn ibid. page 72 ff.*

[182] *All states try to avoid this by concluding contracts based on reciprocity. For Germany, the need for such international agreements soon became apparent in order to prevent collisions, especially with the United States; This is how the famous Bancroft contracts came about. Furthermore, German subjects who are also foreigners do not have to count on protection from the German consuls abroad. In some countries, for example Switzerland, Spain and Great Britain (Naturalization = Act Section 7 Paragraph 3), legal provisions have been made on the matter.*

be called up for military service. This is no longer possible now that the decree has been lifted. Not only can foreign families in the country constantly make themselves envious, but they can also pass on the advantages of their unburdened, abnormal situation to their children and their children's children. In the face of this undeniable evil, the new legal system had to be careful to find appropriate remedies. Where foreigners have gathered in larger numbers and in dense masses, obviously without any thought of returning to their former homeland, the state must ensure that at least their children are able to fully integrate into the life of the association on this side by acquiring citizenship. No state can continue to tolerate foreigners who have actually become naturalized enjoying a hereditary privilege of military freedom in view of their former citizenship unless it wants to suffer a significant loss in its legal unity and thus justifiably arouse great discontent among the local population.

In Germany there is no legal possibility of forcing foreigners who are actually natives to acquire German citizenship. Prussian administrative practice helps itself in the border districts, where such "foreigners" are numerous, by asking them to turn themselves in to the substitute authorities when they reach military age and to seek naturalization. If this does not happen, the state resorts to the only administrative means of repression at its disposal: expulsion. Those states are in a more favorable situation which adhere to the legal principle that everyone born in the country, even if they are descended from foreigners, is a native and a citizen and, as it were, belongs to it as a product of the country. This principle of territoriality, that ius soli in contrast to ius sanguinis, only exists in Europe in Denmark, Norway and the Netherlands; On the other hand, it still applies generally in South America, as well as in the United States of North America.

In a number of states, the jus soli is modified so that the children of foreigners born in the country are considered residents, but have the right to opt for their ancestral nationality once they have reached the age of majority (so-called alienage, for example in England) or initially as foreigners are treated, but can opt for the citizenship of the country of birth once they reach adulthood (for example in France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Spain, Greece and others). However, the states that uphold the jus soli in whole or in large part are obviously overstepping the mark by placing excessive weight on the fact of birth within the country, which more or less depends on chance, and by denying the free

self-determination of the people exclude native-born descendants of foreign parents. Naturally, the recruitment of such nationals into military service, if done against their will, must lead to diplomatic conflicts with the foreign state whose nationality they claim.

It is not birth, but upbringing and environment that determine children's national views and inclinations. If the parents are foreigners who have retained their foreign nationality, the children will regularly have the same nationality. Only continued, long-term residence in the country can possibly introduce them to the local national views and make them natives in customs and language. It is therefore justified to regard the descendants of foreigners as foreigners despite their birth in the country if they have not lived in the country for years.

However, since the host state in which these people live has an urgent interest in ending the dubious constitutional situation and in treating people who are actually naturalized as naturalized, it is advisable for states that allow the descent of foreigners despite their birthdomestically as foreign (Germany, Austria=Hungary, Switzerland, Sweden, cfr. Cahn a.a.O., page 20) a restriction of the principle of descent. The following would have to: 1. in order to avoid international disputes, there should be no coercion against those people who can prove the continued existence of a foreign tribe,

2. to combat homelessness, the incorporation of those who cannot prove foreign nationality must be enforced. Simply adopting the French-style option principle would not be practical because it would not prevent compulsory military service from being evaded despite actual naturalization. In fact, France has already reversed the rule of the civil code in that, according to the laws of February 7, 1851 and December 16/28, 1874, all children born in France of foreigners who were themselves born in France are considered French and only have the right to choose to live abroad within one year of reaching the age of majority if they can prove that they continue to have foreign citizenship through a certificate from the foreign country in question.) However, this incorporation into nationality only affects the second generation of those born in the country, without dealing further with the first generation.

Italy goes further and correctly emphasizes next to birth domestically, the domicile according to § 8 of the Civil Code, which reads: "E riputato cittadino il figlio nato nel regno da staniero che via abbia fissato il suo domicilio da dieci anni non interrotti ... Egli puo tuttavia ellegere la qualita di staniero, purche ne faccia Dilation in tempo and mode of stability in the 5th article. (This requires an explanation before the civil official or, abroad, before the diplomatic agent.) These French and Italian laws provide noteworthy points of view for the necessary modification of the German indigenous law. But how would this most effectively be achieved? von Martitz, a.a.O., pages 1169, 1170 and 1146, proposes an addition to § 12 of the law of June 1, 1870 in the following way: "However, anyone who was born in Germany from parents who lived there without the intention of to return to their homeland, unless they are able to prove their continued citizenship there through a declaration from a foreign authority." But the animus non revertendi is not a suitable distinguishing feature because it always remains doubtful; The only reliable basis for accepting this is the long duration of the stay. Only this offers a guarantee that national assimilation has taken place.

The proposal made by Bar a.a. O. Page 174 is to treat the native children of foreigners as nationals by law if the father was already born in the country and if the father is not within six months of the birth of the child by a formal declaration from the authority of the Place of birth whose foreign nationality is maintained. This proposal has the same shortcomings as the French law of December 28, 1874, which unilaterally emphasizes the place of birth and releases the first generation. The children's right to self-determination must not be excluded in advance;

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After all, the child itself should become a citizen of the host state; it must not be forced against its will to give up its ancestral nationality. If von Bar was concerned that, especially at the age of majority, the fear of compulsory military service would lead to refusing to acquire nationality, such selfish motives can also underlie the parents' choice of nationality, and of course they can Individuals should act to their advantage at all, including when choosing their tribe. He must remain free of this freedom, especially if he may have to pay for it with expulsion.

If, like France and Italy, one is committed to the option principle, the question must be raised as to whether the time of the option would not be more appropriate to move to the beginning of the 20th year of life, since compulsory military service, especially in Germany, begins at the 20th year and in this Age sufficient insight can be assumed.

Taking into account the points listed and the existing foreign legislation, it is therefore advisable to add the following to § 12 of the law of June 1, 1870: "The descendants of foreigners born in the territory of a federal state are by law citizens of this federal state if their father, or in the case of illegitimate children, their mother was resident continuously in the territory of the German Reich for at least ten years. However, between the ages of eighteen and nineteen, they can reject German citizenship by making a written declaration to the competent authority if they can prove the continued existence of their foreign citizenship through a certificate from the competent authority in their home country.

If the acquisition of nationality for native-born descendants of foreigners were to be organized in the manner described, then a legitimate type of acquisition of nationality would again be recognized in the modern state. Actually naturalized persons would be given a right to naturalization and their involvement in the fulfillment of civic duties would be secured through the ipso iure acquisition of nationality.

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Apart from these anomalous cases, the legal institution of acquiring citizenship no longer has any place within the framework of modern constitutional law. It has lost its previous functional value and has been replaced by appropriate facilities in the legal system of the German state.

At the end of my work, I would like to express my warmest thanks to my highly respected teacher, Professor Dr Stoerk, for presenting the topic and for the suggestion and support given in the development of it.

Curriculum Vitae

I, Albert Grödel, was born on March 3, 1868 in Friedberg (Hesse). I received my previous education at the "St. Stephan" in Augsburg, which I left in the fall of 1888 with a certificate of maturity.

In the years 1890-1894 I studied law and political science at the universities of Munich, Berlin and Greifswald, with interruptions during which I was involved in the business ventures of my father, who was based in Marmaros=Sziget (Hungary).

On March 6, 1894, I passed the rigorosum exam at the law faculty at the University of Greifswald.

During my time as a student, I listened to the lectures of the following professors:

Bechmann, Bierling, Birkmeyr, Dambach, Dernburg, von Gneist, Goldschmidt, Haeberlin, Hinschius, Kohler, Pernice, Pescatore, Plank, Riehl, Rubo, von Sicherer, Stampe, Stoerk, Wagner and Weismann.

I would like to express my most respectful thanks to all of these gentlemen.

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Some portions of this book were edited or refined using OpenAI's ChatGPT and other language tools. All editorial decisions, structure, and narrative content are the sole responsibility of the author.

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DDB = Deutsche Digitale Bibliothek

AZBG = Anzeigeblatt der Stadt und des Regierungsbezirks Giessen
IBFO = Intelligenz-Blatt für die Provinz Oberhessen im Allgemeinen

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Interesting Videos

- Kommando: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NBrg-csuurY
- Dissolution of Hungary: Treaty of Trianon: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7VNQG5Ug2Jc

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ADDENDUM

Baron Arthur Groedel: Service and Sacrifice

Note: *After completing the manuscript and bringing the book close to its final form, I received Arthur's official military records from the archives in Vienna. Rather than revising his chapter—changes that would have introduced significant complications throughout the book—I have chosen to present this new material below as a separate addendum.*

Raised in a family that had risen from immigrant industrialists to Hungarian nobility within a generation, Arthur was marked early for a life of diplomacy and leadership. In 1914, Emperor Franz Joseph appointed him honorary Austro-Hungarian consul in Vancouver, British Columbia—a prestigious post for a promising young aristocrat. But when war broke out in Europe that same year, Arthur relinquished his consular duties and returned to Europe, volunteering for military service with the Austro-Hungarian army.

Arthur began his wartime career in the 15 cm Haubitzbatterie No. 36, Feldartillerieregiment No. 4, a heavy field howitzer unit. By the autumn of 1915, he had been deployed to the Gallipoli Peninsula, part of a small Austro-Hungarian artillery contingent supporting the Ottoman Empire in its struggle against the Entente powers. Between December 1915 and March 1916, he served as personal adjutant to Group Commander Josef Martinek, gaining experience in both logistics and frontline coordination. His battery saw action at Ari Burnu, Anafarta, and Sedülbahir, and Arthur's courage and dedication earned him the Ottoman Iron Crescent, also known as the Gallipoli Star.

In early 1916, Arthur played a key role in transporting heavy Austrian artillery by rail and sea from Central Europe to the Ottoman front, a complex and strategically vital logistical operation. His leadership during this redeployment was formally commended in military records for his "excellent command of the battery entrusted to him both during railway transport and later in the field." From November to December 1916, he oversaw the movement of his battery through difficult terrain near Angista, on the eastern bank of the Strymon River, demonstrating remarkable energy, caution, and precision under adverse conditions. This effort greatly aided the Turkish defenses and showcased the high level of Austro-Hungarian commitment to the alliance.

Promoted to lieutenant of the reserves on August 10, 1916, Arthur remained with his unit. While later stationed in Constantinople, he also organized a mil-

itary workshop depot for his battery during his off-duty hours, earning additional praise for initiative and administrative talent. The facility, built using limited resources and captured Russian matériel, was credited as becoming operational in record time, largely thanks to Arthur's reliable leadership.

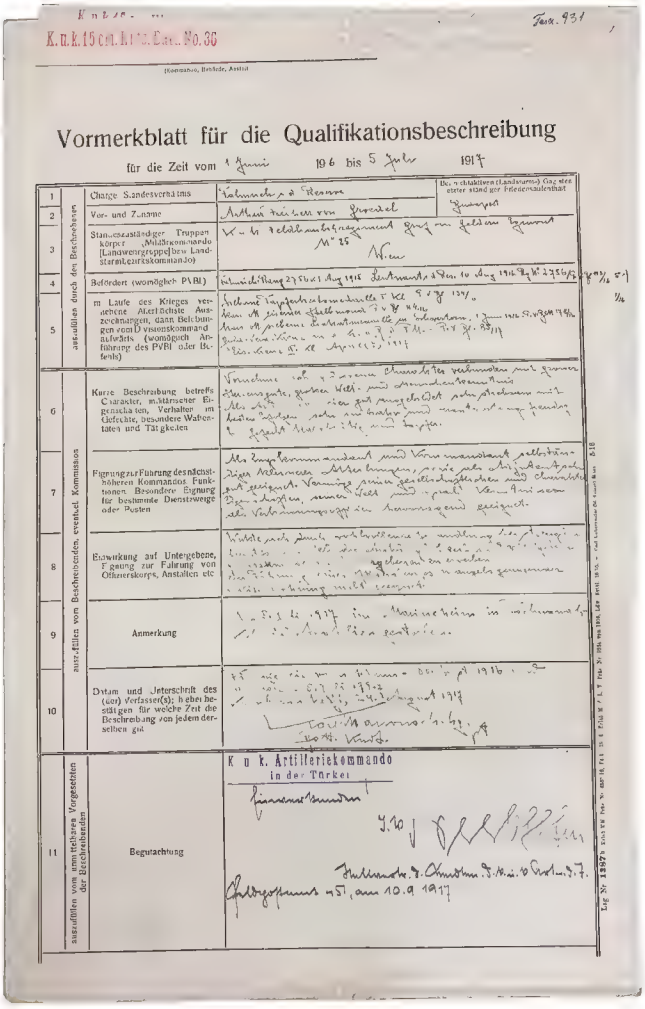
In 1917, Arthur returned to field duty, now serving under Turkish military command on the Asia Minor front near ancient Troy. His conduct as a battery commander continued to earn high praise; he was described as "particularly diligent and conscientious... well-liked and respected among the troops... displays exceptional energy and leadership." His final evaluation report, covering the period from November 18, 1916, to June 4, 1917, further affirmed these qualities, noting that he carried out his duties conscientiously and with initiative. He was commended for his military judgment, loyalty, and assertiveness, and was deemed fully qualified to bear the responsibilities of a reserve officer. His leadership style—fair and effective in dealing with subordinates—reinforced his fitness for command. In recognition of his service, he was honored not only by the Austro-Hungarian high command but also by the Ottomans, who awarded him the **Ottoman Liakat Medal (Silver)** and the **Order of Lyakat with Swords.**

On June 29, 1917, Arthur fell gravely ill from dysentery, a common and often fatal disease on the front. He was evacuated to the German field hospital in Çanakkale, where he died on July 5, 1917, at the age of 29.

His funeral in Constantinople on July 10 was conducted with full military honors. The procession began at the Chapel of St. Mary within the Austro-Hungarian Embassy and proceeded to the Feriköy Catholic Cemetery, where he was laid to rest. The ceremony was presided over by Hungarian Franciscan friar Pál Schrotty and attended by Austro-Hungarian ambassador Johann Pallavicini, senior officers from the Austro-Hungarian, German, and Turkish armies, and numerous other dignitaries.

Twelve years later, in 1929, his remains were exhumed and transferred to the family crypt in Vienna's Zentralfriedhof, where he was reinterred alongside other members of the Groedel family.

Arthur's death was mourned not only by his family but also by many in Hungary and the broader Austro-Hungarian sphere who had come to see him as a symbol of courage, initiative, and international cooperation. His efforts strengthened Austro-Hungarian–Ottoman ties, and his service was remembered not only for bravery but also for diplomacy, technical skill, and leadership under pressure.



K.u.k. 15 cm. Hftz. Batt. No. 36

(Kommando, Branche, Anstalt)

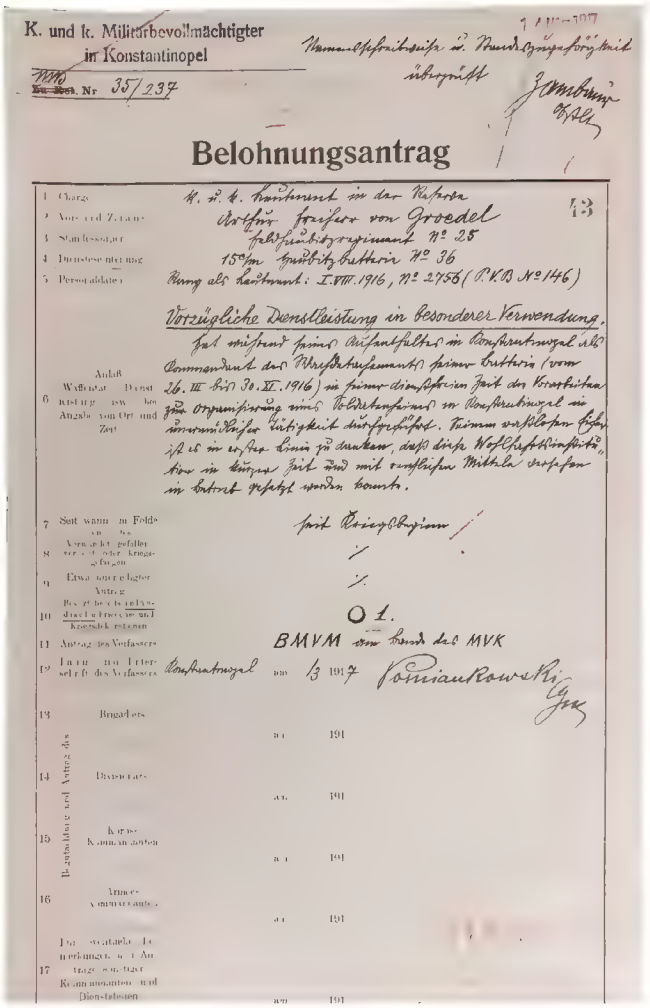
Tarn. 931

Vormerkblatt für die Qualifikationsbeschreibung

für die Zeit vom 1 Juni 196 bis 5 Juli 1917

1	zusammen durch den Beschreibenden	Charge, Standesverhältnis	Fähnrich d. Reserve (Bei wehrhaften (Landsturm) Cag etwa etwa stand der Friedensanstellung)
2		Vor- und Zuname	Arthur Freiherr von Groedel
3		Standesständiger Truppenkörper (Militärkommando [Landwehrgruppe] bzw. Landsturmbezirkskommando)	K. u. k. Infanterieregiment Freiherr von Hofmann Nr. 25 Wien
4		Befördert (womöglich PVBl)	Leutnant 27 Mai 1915 Leutnant d. Res. 10 Aug 1916 PVBl Nr. 2756/5
5		im Laufe des Krieges verliehene Auszeichnungen, ganz kurze Belohnungen vom Divisionskommando aufwärts (womöglich Anführung des PVBl oder Befehls)	Leutnant Tapferkeitsmedaille 1. Kl. PVBl 1334/0 [illegible]
6	zusammen durch den Beschreibenden, eventuell Kommissionen	Kurze Beschreibung betreffs Charakter, militärischer Eigenschaften, Verhalten im Gefechte, besondere Waffentaten und Tätigkeiten	Vorzügliche Dienstleistung in besonderer Verwendung. Hat während seiner Aufenthalte in Konstantinopel als Kommandant der Ordonnanzoffiziere seiner Batterie (vom 26. III. bis 30. XI. 1916) in seiner dienstlichen Zeit der Artillerie zur Organisierung eines Fährtenpferdes in Konstantinopel in vorzüglicher Tätigkeit durchgeführt. Trotzdem verschlossen [illegible] ist es in erster Linie zu danken, dass diese Waffengattung in kurzer Zeit und mit einfachen Mitteln verfügen in Betrieb gesetzt werden konnte.
7		Eignung zur Führung des nächsthöheren Kommandos, Funktionen, Besondere Eignung für bestimmte Dienstzweige oder Posten	Als Zugskommandant und Kommandant selbständiger Ordonnanzen, wie sie sehr oft [illegible] gut geeignet. Vermöge seiner gesellschaftlichen und [illegible] Bildung, seiner Sprachkenntnisse und [illegible] als Verbindungsoffizier besonders geeignet.
8		Einwirkung auf Untergebene, Eignung zur Führung von Offizierskorps, Anstalten etc	[illegible]
9	zum Teile vom Beschreibenden, eventuell Kommissionen	Anmerkung	1. Feb. 1917 [illegible]
10		Datum und Unterschrift des (der) Verfasser(s); bitte anbei zu bestätigen für welche Zeit die Beschreibung von jedem derselben gilt	[illegible] Oberstleutnant 1917 [illegible] Oberst.
11	zusammen vom nächsthöheren Vorgesetzten der Beschriebenden	Begutachtung	K u k. Artilleriekommando in der Türkei [illegible] Feldpostamt 51, am 10.9 1917

Lag. Nr. 13527

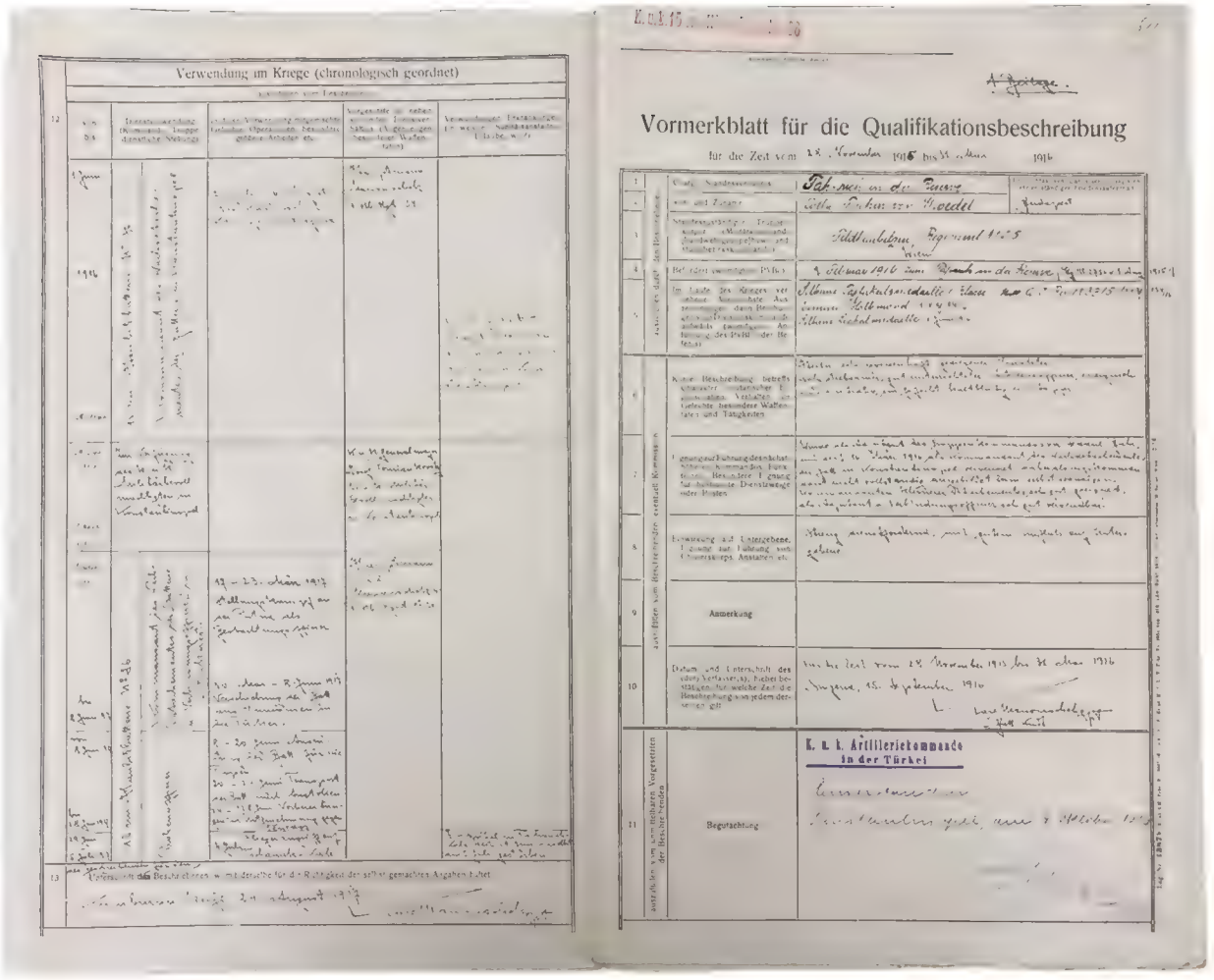


K. und k. Militärbevollmächtigter in Konstantinopel

Nr. 35/237

Belohnungsantrag

1	Charge	K. u. k. Fähnrich in der Reserve
2	Vor- und Zuname	Arthur Freiherr von Groedel
3	Truppenkörper	Infanterieregiment Nr. 25
4	Dienstbezeichnung	15cm Haubitzbatterie Nr. 36
5	Personaldaten	Rang als Leutnant: I.VIII.1916, Nr. 2758 (V.K.B. Nr. 146)
6	Anlaß (Waffentat, Dienstleistung usw. bei Angabe von Ort und Zeit)	Vorzügliche Dienstleistung in besonderer Verwendung. Hat während seiner Aufenthalte in Konstantinopel als Kommandant der Ordonnanzoffiziere seiner Batterie (vom 26. III. bis 30. XI. 1916) in seiner dienstlichen Zeit der Artillerie zur Organisierung eines Fährtenpferdes in Konstantinopel in vorzüglicher Tätigkeit durchgeführt. Trotzdem verschlossen [illegible] ist es in erster Linie zu danken, dass diese Waffengattung in kurzer Zeit und mit einfachen Mitteln verfügen in Betrieb gesetzt werden konnte.
7	Seit wann in Feldverwendung	seit Kriegsbeginn
8	Verwundet gefallen oder kriegsgefangen	/
9	Etwa noch fehlender Vortrag	/
10	Bezeichnung des Vorgesetzten, der den Vortrag zu erstatten hat	O 1.
11	Antrag des Verfassers	BMVM vom Land des MVK
12	Datum und Unterschrift des Verfassers	Konstantinopel am 3 1917 Konniankowetzki Hptm
13	Brigadiers	am 191
14	Divisionärs	am 191
15	Korps-Kommandanten	am 191
16	Armee-Kommandanten	am 191
17	Das vorstehende Belohnungsantrage wird zur Kenntnis genommen und Dienstleistungen	am 191

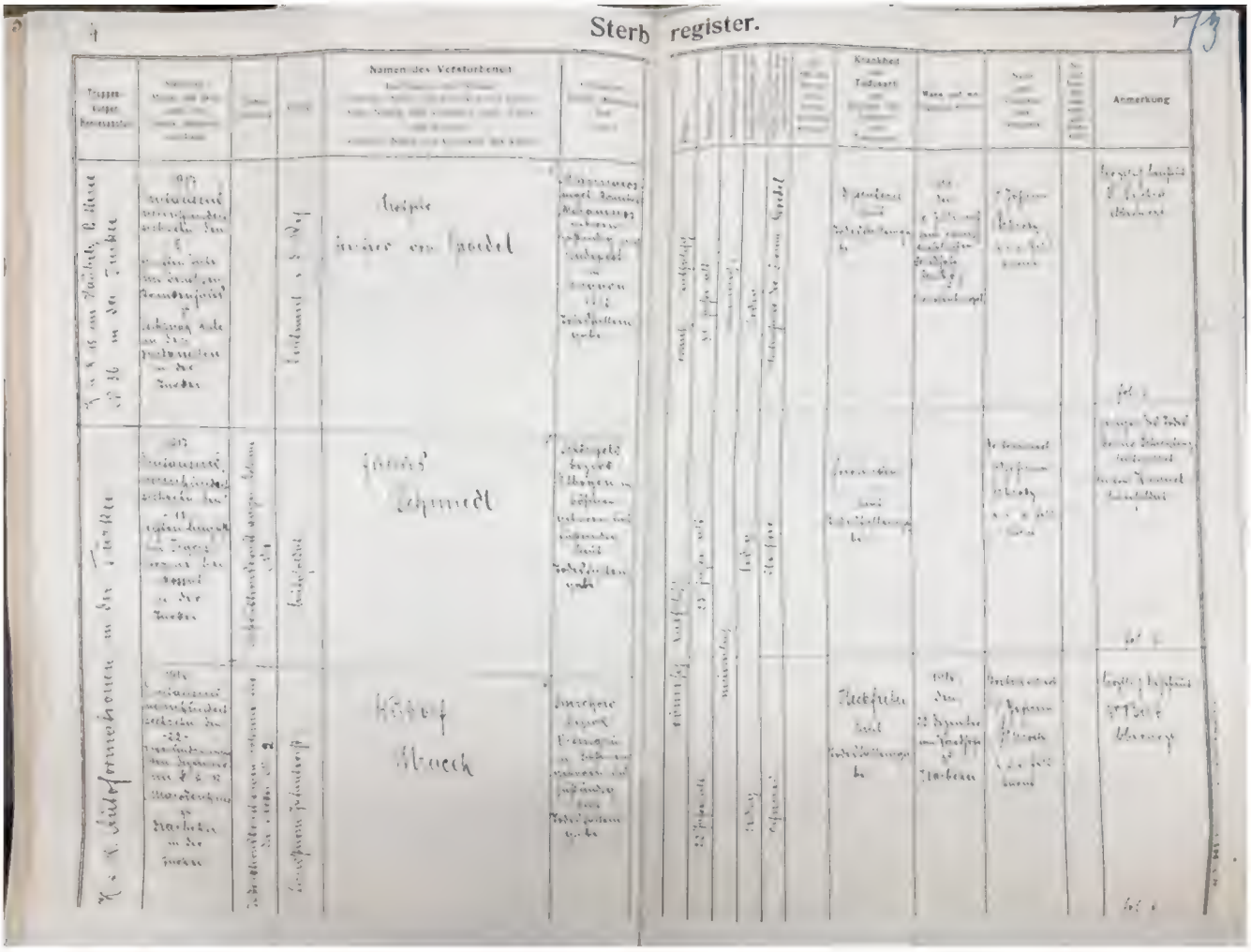


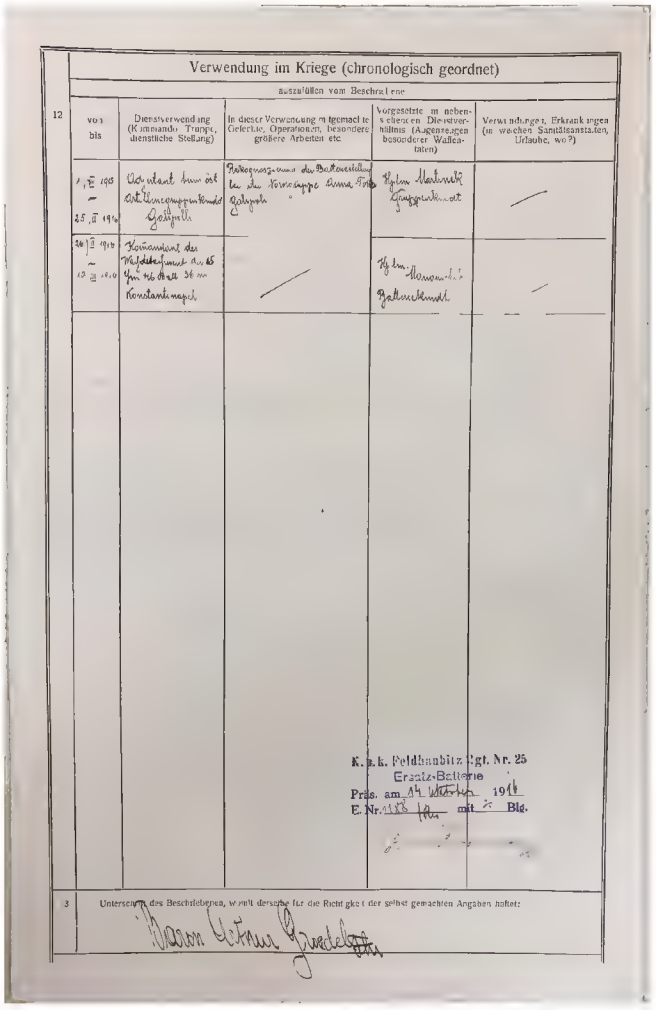
Verwendung im Kriege (chronologisch geordnet)

Vormerkblatt für die Qualifikationsbeschreibung

für die Zeit vom 28. November 1915 bis 31. März 1916

K. u. k. Artilleriekommando in der Türkei


Sterb register.
Name des Verstorbenen
Krankheit
Anmerkung



Verwendung im Kriege (chronologisch geordnet)

auszufüllen vom Beschreibenden

12	von bis	Dienstverwendung (Kommando Truppe, dienstliche Stellung)	In dieser Verwendung mitgemachte Gefechte, Operationen, besondere größere Arbeiten etc	Vorgesetzte im nebenstehenden Dienstverhältnis (Abgenzeigen besonderer Waffenarten)	Verwundungen, Erkrankungen (in welchen Sanitätsanstalten, Urlaube, wo?)
	1. V. 1915 – 25. V. 1915	Ordonnanz beim Kdt. d. Artilleriegruppenkommando Galizien	Beobachtungsraum der Batterieabteilung der Division Szurmay Gorlice	Hptm. Hanisch Infanterie	
	30. V. 1915 – 10. VI. 1915	Kommandant der Meldestelle Nr. 65 Jaworzno Stadt 36 cm Kanonenbatterie		Hptm. Hanisch Infanterie	

K. u. k. Feldhaubitz Rgt. Nr. 25
Ersatz-Batterie
Präs. am 14 Oktober 1916
E. Nr. 1188 Mu. mit 2 Blg.

3 Unterschrift des Beschreibenden, womit derselbe für die Richtigkeit der selbst gemachten Angaben haftet:

Johann Ritter Breckheimer

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

I grew up in Brooklyn, NY, in the Sheepshead Bay and Brighton Beach neighborhoods to Joseph and Shirley.

In high school, I enjoyed English classes and writing, though I admit to being somewhat lazy and didn't study much. Ironically, my career in the computer industry required extensive writing—primarily technical and marketing material—which became the foundation of my writing experience.

While working as a computer engineer, I wrote white papers and had an article published in a respected trade magazine in 2001. That experience encouraged me to continue writing.

By the late 1990s, I had developed a deep interest in my family's history, as noted in the beginning of this manuscript. When I learned that the Mormon Church had acquired rights to photograph and index vital records across Europe, I began visiting their branch in the Washington, DC. area, sifting through rolls of microfilm and piles of microfiche. My sister, Bonnie, was doing the same in Los Angeles and together, we slowly composed our family's story, tracing our roots back to Hungary. The wealth of material we uncovered—and the stories they told—demanded to be well documented and preserved for our family and others.

I am retired, married to Marlene, and have a wonderful daughter, Samantha, as well as a grandson who keeps me very active whenever we're together.

Jerry Zeisler